DEMOCRATIC PALESTINE
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Two Military Operations in the Heart of the Beast

DEMOCRATIC PALESTINE

Democratic Palestine is an English language magazine published by the PFLP. It replaces the *PFLP Bulletin*, which was published monthly from March 1979 until the 1982 Zionist invasion of Lebanon (issues no. 25-62) and bimonthly through November 1983 (no. 63-69).

By changing the name we wish to signal our intent to engage a broader section of progressive forces around the world in dialogue and relations of mutual solidarity that will strengthen the struggle for a democratic Palestine in the context of the global struggle against imperialism and its allies.

Democratic Palestine is published with the following aims:

— conveying the political line of the PFLP and other progressive Palestinian and Arab forces

— providing current information and analysis pertinent to the Palestinian liberation struggle, as well as developments on the Arab and international levels

— serving as a forum and instrument for building relations of mutual solidarity between the Palestinian revolution and progressive organizations, parties, national liberation movements and countries around the world.

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The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine is a Marxist - Leninist organization and an integral component of the Palestine Liberation Organization. A primary motive for establishing the PFLP was to inject a clear class perspective in the Palestinian national liberation struggle. Experience shows that the most oppressed classes - the workers, peasants, sectors of the petit bourgeoisie, the camp Palestinians - are those most in contradiction with imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction. It is they who carve history with determination that can persevere in a protracted war against the enemy alliance.

The PFLP is deeply commited to the unity and independent, national decision - making of the Palestinian people and their sole, legitimate representative, the PLO. To this end, we work for strengthening the role of the Palestinian left, thereby accentuating the PLO's anti-imperialist line in common struggle with the Arab national liberation movement.

The process of liberating Palestine relies on radical, national democratic change or development in one or more of the surrounding Arab countries. This will provide the PLO with a strong base for liberating Palestine. Thus, the struggle for a democratic Palestine is linked to the creation of a united, democratic, and ultimately socialist, Arab society. This will provide the objective basis for eradicating the poverty, exploitation, oppression and the problem of minorities, from which the people of the area suffer.

As a cornerstone in this process, the establishment of a democratic, secular state in Palestine will provide a democratic solution for the Jewish question in this area, while simultaneously restoring the national rights of the Palestinian people. After liberation, Jews in Palestine, like all citizens, will enjoy equal rights and duties. The decision of the PLO to establish an independent Palestinian state on any liberated part of the national soil is a step in this direction. It is the sincere hope of all Palestinian revolutionaries that more and more Israelis will recognize that they too have become victims of Zionism's racism, expansionism, exploitation and militarism, and will join us in the struggle for a democratic Palestine.

This issue was sent to press on April 30th.

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Editorial

The historical opportunity of the present stage; transition from the stage of steadfastness to that of confrontation.

With the departure of the last French soldier from Beirut on March 20th, a new stage of the struggle in Lebanon, and that of the whole area, commences. The struggle opens to possibilities - positive and negative. Though the alteration in the balance of forces gives more possibilities to a positive development, negative trends must be analyzed and overcome in order to transfer from the stage of steadfastness to one of confrontation.

The nationalist triangle represented by Syria, the Lebanese National Forces and the Palestinian Revolution, is surrounded by objective conditions which allow these forces to advance and by directing a powerful blow, change the balance of forces in the area in their common favour. Yet, due to a number of obstacles within the triangle itself, gaps exist through which the enemy could penetrate.

The great victory achieved by the Lebanese National Forces against the ruling fascist authorities, directly supported by US forces, the multi-national forces and Israel, was a turning point in two senses. It defeated the view that the 1982 invasion meant a total collapse and required complete submission to the American, fascist and Zionist plans, and confirmed the view that mass resurgence against the forces of invasion can free Lebanon from occupation and exploitation. It changed the balance of forces from the fascists preparing to dominate Lebanon and oppressing the nationalist forces totally - through the May 17th agreement, a Camp David solution for Lebanon, to the cancellation of this agreement due to the struggle of the Nationalist Forces, thereby being able to impose their own just demands.

The Lebanese National Forces, backed by Syria and supported by the Palestinian Revolution forced US to pull out, and the US was not able to return through the United Nation's forces. Prior to this, the US administration had rejected to make any compromises on the May 17th agreement, or even discuss any amendments to it, while the Israelis considered the agreement the price for their 1982 invasion.

Israel now faces two options - both difficult. Either it keeps its forces in South Lebanon, which will be costly politically and economically as the daily average loss in the Zionist forces, due to the heroic operations of the armed popular resistance, ▶

is one dead and one wounded; and the financial costs are $1 million, a day. Or it withdraws from South Lebanon - an option which does not provide guarantees against military operations from South Lebanon to occupied Palestine. To this comes the aggravating political and economic crisis 'Israel' is facing and its present fear of the Syrian military force. Because of this, it is unable to launch a large-scale military adventure which would aim at returning the balance of forces to the stage prior to the nationalist victory.

As to the fascists, the victory has inflicted heavy losses on them, increased their differences,aborted their plans of controlling all of Lebanon, and consequently they were compelled to compromise at the Lausanne Conference for national reconciliation.

The continuation of the armed struggle against the Zionist forces in South Lebanon and the escalation of this struggle, qualitatively and quantitatively, will increase the crisis of the enemy and effect more changes not only in Lebanon but in the area as a whole, and the continued cooperation between the Lebanese National Forces and the Palestinian Revolution will strengthen both of them.

The victory achieved in Lebanon was founded on the basis of the nationalist triangle: Lebanese-Palestinian-Syrian. The effects of this victory will therefore not be limited to Lebanon, neither geographically nor politically. This victory defeated the American administration's and the Zionist enemy's plans for Lebanon, which are directly linked to their projects for the whole area. Therefore, the positive reflections of this will gradually show in the positions the enemy had planned to be their new attacking points after their victory in Lebanon.

Jordan, for instance, being the second circle to follow Camp David on Reagan's list, has after the cancellation of the May 17th agreement, increased difficulties in going ahead with its and the American administration's project for negotiations with the Zionist enemy on the future of the West Bank and Gaza on the basis of the Reagan plan.

On the Palestinian level, the reflections will be deep. It opens for the Palestinian Revolution to strengthen their struggle through fighting the forces of occupation in South Lebanon and mobilize through political, social and cultural activities in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon. It also strengthens the democratic forces in fighting the capitulationist trend and producing radical reforms in the PLO.

All these elements constitute the positive options in the coming stage: the option of using the new balance of forces to advance to an attacking stage. The main element enabling this change in the balance of forces after 1982 is the Soviet Union's great support to Syria and the national alliance which will continue to be the main element allowing more changes in the regional balance during this stage.

This stage also contains obstacles which should be overcome, so all efforts can be directed against the enemy's plans. One obstacle is the enemy's attempts to create conflicts within the Lebanese nationalist forces. Another is the attempts of the Zionist enemy in making local «security» arrangements to avoid great losses within its forces.

On the Palestinian level, the dangers resulting from Arafat's visit to Cairo, and what followed from this visit, disenabled the PLO from having a central role in the preceeding battles, and if things continue as they are, this will be an obstacle against the positive option.

For the PLO to play a central role in the struggle against the imperialist plans and to secure the Palestinian People's right to self-determination and the building of an independent state, unity must be reached on the basis of a national program. The capitulationist trend must be seen to an end to bring about radical changes within the PLO in order bring the PLO back to its central, political role in the area.

The opportunity of changing the balance of forces in the area which would restrain the enemy and pose new questions was never as ripe as it is today. The qualitative support of the Soviet Union forms an umbrella which ensures neutralization of the imperialist forces; such a protection never occurred in the area previously. By giving the National Lebanese Movement, the Syrians and the Palestinian Revolution a historical opportunity to direct further blows against the Zionist enemy, further alterations in the balance of forces can be achieved.●

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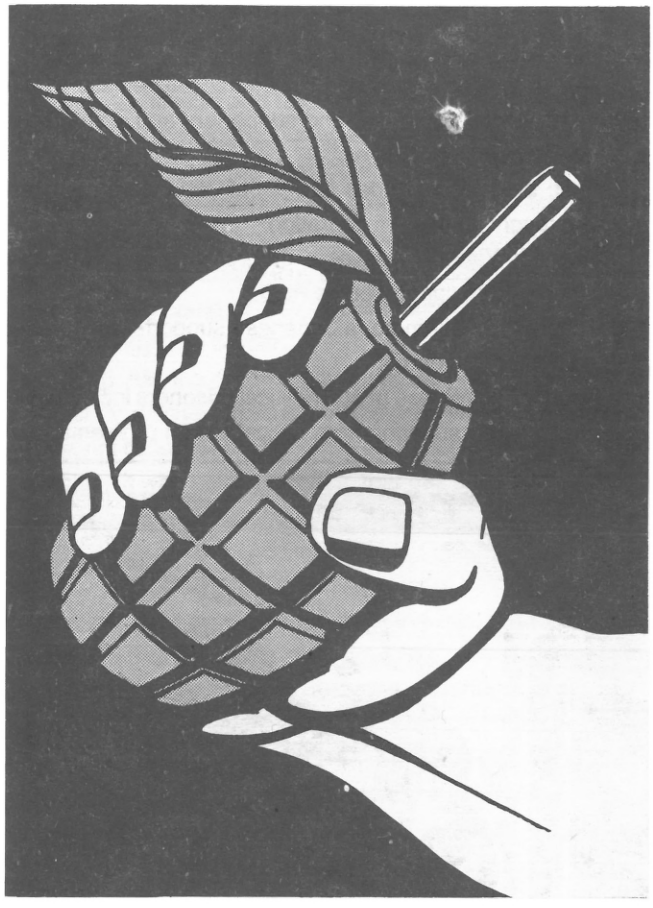
Two Military Operations in the Heart of the Beast



In the space of ten days, two major operations, requiring complicated logistics, were carried out deep in occupied Palestine by militants of the DFLP and PFLP, respectively. This escalation signifies the determination of the revolutionary Palestinian organizations to support and escalate the daily struggle waged by our masses under occupation, with molotovs and stones. It indicates strategic resolve to continue and advance the armed struggle to the stage of all-out people's war, as the main means for liberating Palestine and establishing a democratic society.

At the same time, such operations are a defiant answer to right-wing Palestinian and Arab circles who try to justify their own surrender by claimimg it impossible to confront the Zionist enemy's military prowess. This right-wing trend gained momentum after the PLO's withdrawal from Beirut, but the revolutionary Palestinian forces drew a far different conclusion from the results of the 1982 Zionist invasion of Lebanon: Far from wiping out the Palestinian revolution's military option, a new set of political and material conditions have been established, whereby the military struggle can be escalated in new forms. Thus, revolutionary Palestinian forces have cooperated closely with the Lebanese National Resistance Front, whose attacks have placed the Israeli occupiers in a state of daily insecurity in South Lebanon. Now, the Palestinian revolution has shown that such insecurity can be spread among the occupiers in Palestine itself.

Escalated anti-occupation resistance serves to bring home the real lessons of the 1982 war and its aftermath: First, prolonged steadfastness and confrontation, as evidenced in the battle of Beirut, the current battle in South Lebanon, and the daily resistance of our masses under occupation, compounds the enemy's crisis, paving the way for the people's eventual victory. Second, the Palestinian revolution and the masses' will to struggle for their rights cannot be eliminated through high-technology, destruction and massacres.

On April 2nd, three commandos of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who belong to the Sabra and Shatila commando group, launched an armed military operation in the heart of the occupied city of Jerusalem. These three heroic commandos attacked the building of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, located at the intersection of St. George Street and Ben Yahoutha Street, and held a number of hostages.

The head of the commando group directed a message to the Zionist leaders demanding the release of a number of Palestinian political prisoners in the Israeli jails. The message also warned the Zionists that they are responsible for any action that may endanger the lives of the hostages. However, as usual, the enemy neglected the warning and stormed the building as ordered by the Prime Minister.

As a result of this attack,a battle occurred between the commandos and the Zionist repressive forces and the settlers causing the death of forty eight people, the leader of the operation, Comrade Abu Rabi' and wounding the other two commandos.

This operation was launched on the Day of the Land to symbolize our people's determination to continue the struggle against the Zionist settler state which aims at transforming the entire Palestinian land, including Jerusalem, into Zionist settlements.

This Day of the Land operation was the first direct confrontation between an armed Palestinian commando group and the Zionist repressive forces in the occupied city of Jerusalem ▶

ever. According to the Zionist forces it was considered as the most courageous military operation on the occupied city of Jerusalem since the 1948 occupation of Palestine.

This operation which was carried out by the three commandos Abu Rabi', Carlos and Fouad did not only fire at the symbols of the Zionist oppression, reppression and racism, but also at the objective of the «security of the Galilee» operation. These commandos came to tell Begin, Sharon and Shamir, who masterminded and carried out the ugly bloody war of 1982, that their mission had failed to subordinate Lebanon and to liquidate the Palestinian revolution and its armed resistance. Begin wanted through his barbaric invasion of Lebanon forty years of stability but he got over forty losses in the most challenging way, in the heart of the occupied Jerusalem which the Zionists claim as their capital.

Shortly following this heroic operation, was the operation of seizing the bus which was carried out by four PFLP comrades. Once again, through a very courageous military operation, the Palestinian revolutionaries asserted that the Palestinian armed struggle is the road to liberation. Once again, our revolutionaries working inside the occupied homeland exposed the Zionist false pretext of the «security» and affirmed the strength of our people's war as the correct line of confronting our enemy. Again, our fighters directed a new blow to all those who contradict our people's will.

On Thursday April 12th, at 7 PM, a group of four PFLP commandos who belong to «Gevera Gaza» commando group which is based in the occupied territories, seized a passenger bus. The bus originated in Tel Aviv and was on its way to Ashkelon via Ashdod. In Ashdod our four comrades got on as paying passengers. Shortly after then, one of the armed commandos demanded the bus driver to proceed to Rafah on the Egyptian border.

The comrades demanded the immediate release of the below mentioned comrades and supporters and a safe passage to Egypt for themselves.

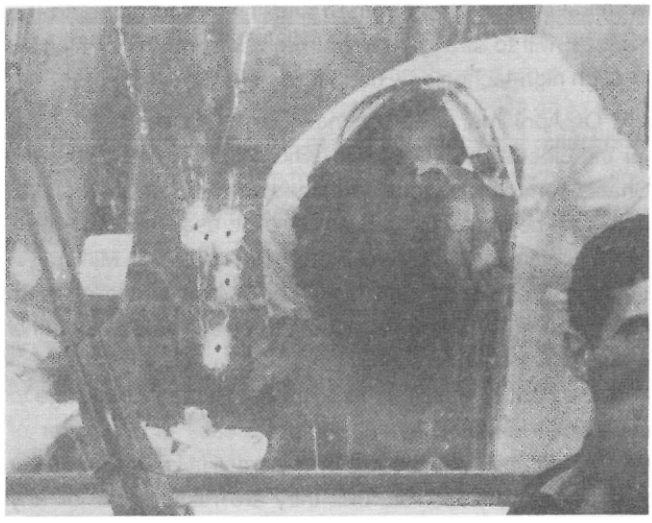
First: the two comrades from DFLP who were captured after the recent Jerusalem operation.

Second: Yahoda Adeve, a progressive Jew who was jailed for his open support of the PLO.

Third: Kozo Okomoto, a Japanese supporter jailed after the Lud's Airport operation.

Fourth: The release of 500 political prisoners including 30 men and women suffering from critical health problems, and

One of the PFLP martyrs



Israeli repressive forces in panic

Picking up the pieces

who are sentenced to prison terms that reached life sentences.

Our comrades made their demands known to the Zionist authorities. All along they were assuring the passengers that they would not be harmed. A passenger, Sidi Edmond, later told reporters that «the take over of the bus started when one of the fedayeen threatened the driver with a hand grenade asking him to proceed to Rafah and was speaking Hebrew with Arabic accent». He added «they treated us well, but I am happy to be out, and very happy that they are dead».

A woman passenger told that the members of the group assured the passengers that they «wanted peace», and that the commandos explained how the Israeli forces killed the Palestinian families and reminded them of various massacres committed by the Israelis against the Palestinian people. Eyewitness reports also mentioned that the commandos had allowed food and drinks for the passengers to enter the bus.

The bus broke through three road blocks before the Israeli forces were able to stop it by deflating its tires near the Palestinian refugee camp of Deir al Balah approximately ten miles from the Egyptian border.

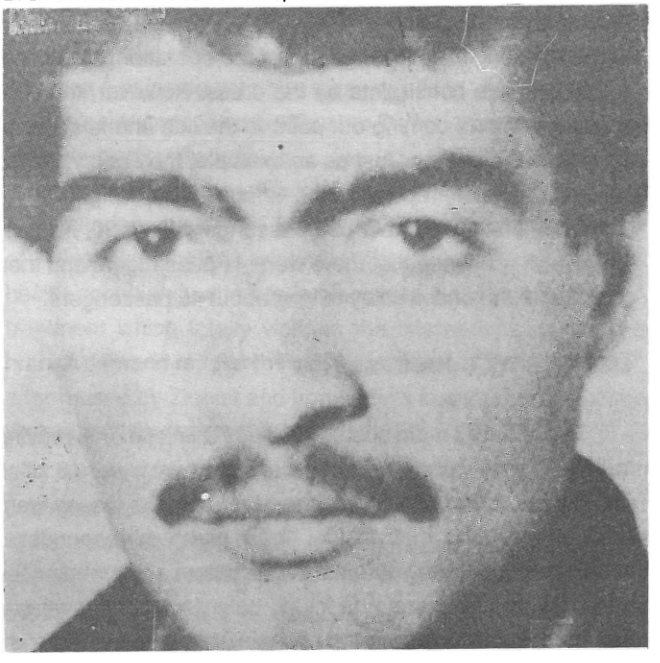
At 5 AM the following morning of Friday the 13th, the Zionist repressive forces ended the operation in a bloody way. They, not caring for the human lives, forced their way to the bus attacking it with hand grenades, tear gas and automatic rifles. Our revolutionary commandos confronted this fascist attack with all their means. According to the Zionist spokesperson, the attack was ordered by the Minister of War, Moshe Arens, and supervised by the Commander in Chief, Moshe Levi, who admitted that the four commandos «were organized and trained inside the country and had obtained their weapons from within». Obviously, this statement is in contradiction with the usual enemy propaganda which claims that the commandos come from outside, and mainly from Lebanon.

Complete censorship of the press:

According to many news correspondents, the operation had confused and cornered the Zionist leaders and intimidated the people throughout the area.

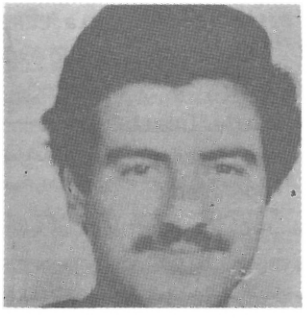
A spokesperson from the military censorship stated soon after the operation that he would not allow any details of the operation to be published. The Zionist repressive forces warned the press against publishing news regarding the operation. A correspondent from the United Press told that those ▶

DFLP's heroes of the Jerusalem operation



Martyr Abu Rabi'

Captured commando Carlos



Captured commando Fouad

PFLP-DFLP Memo to UN

In response to the complaint presented by the Israeli government to the Security Council last night, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine Joint Command sends the following message to the Secretary-General of the UN and distributes it to the international mass media:

In response to the detoriating health situation of many hundreds of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli jails, as a result of fascist, inhuman treatment, and the gravely worsening health of a huge number of these Palestinians, and after Israel has broken the December 1983 agreement to exchange prisoners, both DFLP and PFLP decided to exercise their humanitarian political mission aimed at the release of these detainees. For this, a group of DFLP fighters carried out, on April 2nd, 1984, the Day of the Land operation in Jerusalem, with the purpose of taking hostages from the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Ministry of Tourism, in order to release a number of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails. The Israeli authorities rejected the demands, and our militants were attacked on the orders of the Israeli Defense Minister. The attack caused the death and injury of many persons.

With the same purpose, a group of PFLP commandos carried out, on April 12, an operation against a bus transporting Israeli soldiers: the bus was led towards the Egyptian border in order to negotiate the question away from Israeli treachery. The group released all the women who were in the bus, including a pregnant one. Despite this, the Israeli cabinet ordered an attack on the bus and its passengers. This decision was taken by the Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir, and the Defense Minister, Moshe Arens, in the presence of the Chief of Staff, Moshe Levi. As a result, the Israeli troops, led by Moshe Levi himself, opened fire on the bus and its passengers at a point near the Palestinian-Egyptian border.

Presenting these facts, we put responsibility for what happened on the Israeli cabinet which had given orders to open fire on the bus and its Israeli and Arab passengers.

We emphasize that the UN Charter offered our people, as well as all peoples, the full right to resist the forces of occupation by all available means. What is happening inside the occupied territories - setting up new settlements, confiscation of Arab lands, destruction of buildings and expulsion of the inhabitants from their homes - constitutes acts of daily aggression and terror, committed by Israel against our people. We see that it is the right and duty of our people to resist what the Israeli government is practicing, to resist by all possible means till we achieve recognition of our right to self-determination and complete independence on our soil.

We would like to attract the attention of the UN and international public opinion to the preparatory steps of the Israeli government aimed at committing an aggression against Palestinian and Arab patriotic forces. The complaint presented by Israel to the Security Council last night is one of these steps, realized with the purpose of launching an aggressive attack against Syria, PLO and the Arab liberation movement.

DFLP-PFLP
April 14, 1984.

who witnessed the operation were prevented from sending news out. Another news agency correspondent mentioned the Israeli force had set up a large blockade around the bus and hundreds of armed soldiers were seen in the area.

Attempting to limit the effects of the operation, the enemy put all possible constraints on the press. However, the contradictory reports coming out point to the lies and false propaganda of the enemy. Just as an example, the enemy's radio gave contradictory reports on the number of passengers in the bus. They first talked about 35 passengers, then 30. Another time, they mentioned that there were 41 passengers and then contradicted themselves by talking about 45 passengers.

The enemy's losses:

The enemy's radio quoted a military spokesman as saying that the losses, according to official statements, were 8 killed and 5 injured. Yet our sources indicate that the losses were much higher than that. In fact some press correspondents mentioned that there were many helicopters and ambulances transporting the injured and killed. Later, eyewitness reports from people coming from the occupied territories to Amman, Jordan, pointed out that the Zionist casualties were very high. They added that only two passengers came out of the bus unhurt. In addition, comes the high numbers of injured and killed in the enemy's forces.

Commandos killed after capture:

As to the four members of the group, the enemy's radio and news agencies confirmed that two were killed during the attack and two were taken prisoners. This fact was also revealed by the pictures that were published showing two chained commandos. Also eyewitness reports stated that the Zionists killed the two commandos in revenge for the operation and to make sure that they could not be freed through a future operation. This is clearly put in Moshe Arens' threatening explanation «any 'terrorist' who thinks of carrying out similar operations, should know that he will be killed». This statement also indicates that the enemy killed the two commandos in a desperate attempt to put an end to such operations.

Indeed, this is a clear violation of the international laws stated in the Geneva Convention, regarding political prisoners. It is an important issue that should be followed closely by the

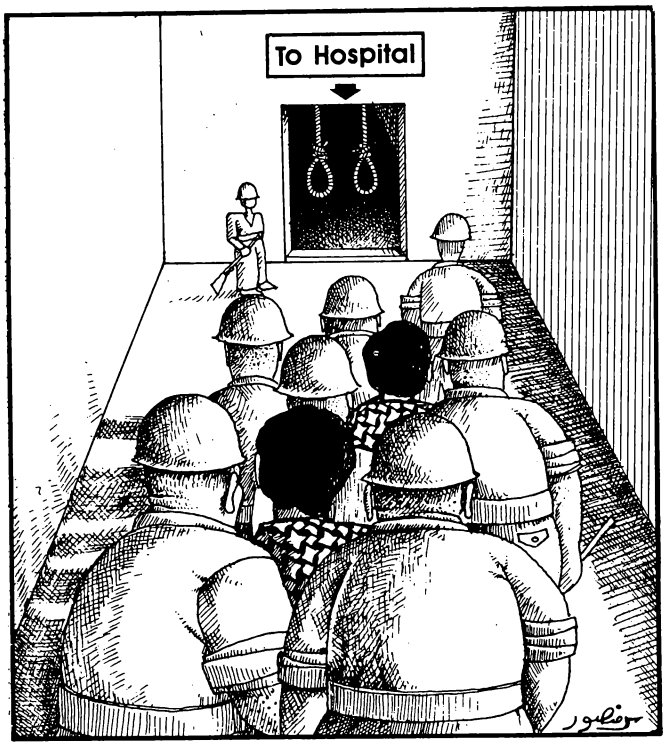
International Red Cross through an open trial. At present the Israeli Knesset is discussing the possible formation of an investigating committee of the incident. This came after the exposure of the incident by various news agencies, mainly an Israeli newspaper known as 'Hadashoot' (the Affairs) and a Time magazine news correspondent.

The second crime committed by the enemy is the total demolishing of the homes of our four martyrs who led the operation: Subhi Abu Juma' (18), Majdi Abu Juma' (19), Mohammed Barakha (18), and Jamal Qiblan (25).

Since this heroic operation the Jabaliyah camp in the Gaza Strip has been subjected to extensive and widespread repressive and terrorist measures by the enemy. They have arrested approximately 1,000 Arab youths during a large demonstration protesting the demolishing of the homes.

After reviewing the operation we would like to analyze the enemy's reaction which speaks for the success of the operation on all levels militarily, politically and security.

Moshe Levi, Commander in Chief, admitted that the four commandos did not come from outside, they were residents of the occupied territories. They were organized and obtained their weapons in the area through a special system of communication. This is a significant admission which contradicts the Zionist plans and propaganda that tries to give credibility to the myth that the Arabs in the occupied territories accept occupation and that the problem is the Arab states, not the Palestinians. This admission will make any future attempts to undermine the national position of Arabs under occupation useless. It definitely gives all the enemy's plans, such as the so-called 'self-rule' another heavy blow and asserts our just struggle as one of national liberation. This conclusion was obvious in the Zionist leaders' declarations. In an interview with Maariv newspaper, Isaac Shamir said: «that Israel will be compelled to suffer from 'terrorist' attacks for hundreds of years to come...» Former Prime Minister Isaac Rabin commented on the operation by saying that «it appears that we must free ourselves from the illusions that we can completely demolish the PLO, as claimed by Shamir's government».



The operation imposed a second Zionist admission, as many of the opposition parties stressed that the bus operation proved the failure of the 'Peace for Galilee' operation, while Shamir believes that his government failed in taking the needed tough measures against the PLO. This is a strong indication of our ability, as revolutionaries, to expose the myths of the «Israeli security», as well as our ability to conquer all the enemy's security measures by our strong determination.

The third Zionist admission came with the declaration that the responsibility of taking the decision to attack the bus, causing the deaths of the Jewish passengers, falls on the Minister of War and the Commander in Chief. This of course disclosed the terrorist nature of the authorities even against Jews themselves.

Finally, we must point out that the two outstanding operations conducted by the comrades of both the DFLP and the PFLP, were a success and both operations were able to accomplish the following:

First: They emphasized the continuation of armed struggle as a strategic line that is firm and will not be compromised upon.

Second: The escalation of the armed struggle to this courageous and daring level demonstrates the Palestinian revolution's ability to reach into the heart of the Zionist entity in spite of the problems the revolution faces and in spite of our enemy's claim that it crippled the revolution militarily.

Third: The exceptional successes of these operations lies in the fact that they were part of a series of other military operations. They are part of the military escalation witnessed in the recent months. They coincide with and are connected to the escalation of mass and political confrontation of Zionist plots. They also coincide with our mass rejection of the Jordanian regime's attempts to undermine the Palestinian national role in the occupied territories.

Fourth: Both operations aimed at achieving political and humanitarian objectives. They were both seeking the release of Palestinian political prisoners who face severe living and health conditions, who are subjected to systematic torture. A treatment which totally violates the international laws. This human demand refutes the claim that it was a 'terrorist attack', a term used by Zionist and Imperialists in order to incriminate the national liberation movements.

All in all, the recent escalation of military operations in occupied Palestine are another expression of the consensus which exists between the PFLP, DFLP, Palestinian Liberation Front and Palestinian Communist Party, on the importance of preserving the unity of the PLO on the basis of the national line in order to further the Palestinian liberation struggle. ●

Land, The Central Issue of Zionist Strategy

March 30th marked the eighth anniversary of the Day of the Land. The historical background of this day relates to the struggle against land confiscation in the Galilee. In the commemoration of this day, the Galilee symbolizes all Palestinian and Arab land. On this day, we also commemorate the martyrdom of six Palestinians, who were killed by the Zionists on March 30, 1976, in the Galilee. They in turn represent the hundreds of martyrs who have fallen in defense of their land and national rights.

The question of land has always been the central theme of Zionism's strategy and plans. The Zionists' ambitions for controlling the land and resources of the area have been cloaked under their basic myth: the false concept of «a land without people for a people without a land». In its search for a state, the Zionist movement eventually chose Palestine as opposed to other proposed sites. This choice was in accordance with imperialist aims and interests in the Middle East. Yet the Zionists still adhere to their myth, and this has led to five wars and subjected the entire region to chronic instability, which threatens world peace.

Since its establishment in May 1948, the Zionist state has derived the bulk of its socio-economic and military policies from the principle of land appropriation. This includes the promotion of Jewish immigration, the expulsion of native Palestinians and the waging of expansionist wars. From the time of the first Zionist Congress in 1897, the Jewish Agency employed all its resources to buy land in order to establish Jewish settlements. The original Zionist land acquisitions were from feudalists and absentee landlords, such as the Lebanese Sursok family, who made the biggest single land sale. Since the Palestinian peasants on the whole refused to sell, only about 8% of Palestine's land was owned by Jews by 1947. Thus, Zionism's built-in logic of violent aggression came into force as the primary means of obtaining «a land without a people». The ultimate thrust of this logic is genocidal, as has been evidenced by repeated Zionist massacres from Deir Yassin in 1948, to Sabra-Shatila in 1982.

Immigration - expansion - emigration

Through collaboration with the British colonialists, Jewish immigration to Palestine increased in preparation for usurping and colonizing the land. To this day, Jewish immigration and emptying the land of the original inhabitants is the most important element of Zionist strategy, which aims to control the land in order to create «Greater Israel». The Zionists' adoption of this goal made all Palestinian and Arab land a target. The concept of «Greater Israel» was not born in an era of Israeli 'supremacy', nor as a result of the 1967 expansion, but was present prior to the establishment of the Zionist entity. In 1937, Ben Gurion, who was to become the first Premier of 'Israel', submitted a report to the Zionist Congress, which outlined the boundaries of the planned state as including:

- South Lebanon to the Litani River
- Southern Syria passing through Homs, Hama and the Assi River
- The east bank of the Jordan River
- All of Mandate Palestine
- The Sinai

The successively adopted laws, which serve as the Israeli constitution, make no mention of the state's boundaries. Obviously, Ben Gurion, and the Zionist leadership generally, viewed the borders established in 1948 as only a step towards the boundaries of «Greater Israel».

Zionist strategy has proceeded in accordance with a clear formula: immigration (of Jews) - expansion - emigration (of Palestinian Arabs). Between immigration and expansion comes aggression and land confiscation to impose a new de facto situation until the next cycle starts. Since expansion is a central aim, military power is a central means. Besides being used to drive Palestinians out, aggression draws large contributions from Jews around the world and the imperialist states, who extend economic support prior to a new war. Aggression also increases the flow oof immigration which may have been receding. Thus, the flow of immigration on - expansion - emigration is applied; military power confiscates the land; the money contributed is invested; and the new immigrants settle in the newly usurped land.

If we quickly review the reasons for the June 1967 aggression and ensuing aggressions, we find the following specific reasons in addition to Zionism's inherent racism and expansionism:

- the Israeli state's small geographical area;
- the noticeable decrease of immigration prior to the 1967 invasion;
- the decrease in Israeli exports;
- the rise in unemployment and financial deficit, and the decrease in economic growth.

Ever since the 1967 aggression, the Israeli authorities have been working to confiscate the occupied land, especially in the West Bank, chiefly under false «security» pretexts or

simply by declaring it «state» land. This is supplemented by an array of aggressive and oppressive measures, including the demolition of Palestinian homes, increased taxation, economic restrictions on the Palestinian inhabitants, etc. All in all, they aim to force the Palestinian Arabs to emigrate. Through this policy the Zionists had established about 144 settlements in the 1967 occupied territories by the end of 1983; 107 of these are in the West Bank.

According to the Israeli newspaper, *Haaretz*, September 20, 1983, «Approximately 55-60% of all West Bank land is now classified as 'state land', so that the authorities can claim it at any time...i.e., most of the land of the West Bank is under the control of the authorities.»

Obviously, plans such as 'autonomy' and 'civil' administration are only other means to achieve the same end. Such plans are part of the Israeli political strategy vis-a-vis the 1967 occupied territories, and clear expressions of the Israeli desire to annex the remaining land of Palestine and liquidate the Palestinian national identity in the face of international community. This way the dream of the world Zionistmovement can be fulfilled - the achievement of «Greater Israel» from the Nile to the Euphrates.

Resistance compounds the Zionist dilemma

In spite of this clear strategy and Israeli military supremacy, the battle continues between the occupation authorities and the Palestinian masses. While our masses' heroic resistance is unable to demolish the Zionist project, it is sufficient to create great obstacles for the enemy, and these obstacles will accumulate in the future. The ongoing resistance of our people under occupation is the real reason behind the resignation of Menachem Milsom, who was in charge of implementing 'civil' administration in the West Bank, and then of his successor, Eli Shlomo. At the same time, the Palestinian national position buried these civil administrators' other pet project: the village leagues, which were nurtured by the Israeli authorities to be an alternative to the PLO.

Various Israeli newspapers have noted the relationship between the failure of 'civil' administration and the so-called Operation Peace for the Galilee, i.e., the invasion of Lebanon, which was intended to finish off the PLO as a means of imposing 'civil' administration. While this was for the purpose of annexing the West Bank especially, the invasion also aimed at occupying Lebanese land, and at a minimum annexing the water resources of the South, i.e., the Litani River. Here we can see the direct relation between the Zionist state's expansionist wars and the confiscation of the land, and also the relation between Israeli-style «peace» and their central theme of land acquisition. The real word for this «peace» is expansion. Moreover, if one reviews the Israeli «peace» proposals since 1948, whether forwarded by Labor or Likud, one finds no substantial differences. The apparent differences are only related to the rationale for their policies. Both parties have followed a policy based on military power and aggression, and both have exerted maximum efforts to annex the 1967 occupied territories.

Repression...Interrogation

Cracks in the myth

It is clear that our enemy has invested tremendous efforts through material, political and military means, in order to fulfill the Zionist myth. However, their failure to achieve the «land without a people» exposes this myth. All the fascist methods applied have failed to empty the land of its original inhabitants. Instead the Zionists' difficulties have accumulated to the point that even some of the most dogmatic have begun to sense that the «desert» is not blooming under their feet, and that the Zionist dream is an illusion. The Zionist leadership faces a dilemma since many of the «people» for whom they usurped the land are now escaping. Immigration policy is in an increasing contradiction. Settlements built on stolen land remain as ghost towns, as was stated in the Israeli newspaper, *Yediot Aharanot*. A report written by an Israeli, Ouzi Narkis, attributes the crisis facing Jewish immigration to the following factors:

- the low number of immigrants from western states;
- increasing emigration, including recent immigrants who soon leave «the promised land»;
- the question of security and the fear of war;
- the lessening of «nationalist» feelings;
- living conditions in 'Israel' and the difficulty of finding work.

No solution with Zionism

In celebrating Land Day, it does not behove us to underestimate the sources of our enemy's strength, nor to exaggerate its weaknesses. Rather we must base our views and struggle on objective facts about the existence of Zionism. The basic objective fact is the continuation and deepening of the major contradiction between the Zionist project and the Arab identity, not only of Palestine but of all Arab land. Day after day, it is confirmed that the Arab-Zionist conflict is a struggle for existence and not for specific geographical boundaries. For this reason, the contradiction will not be resolved until one or the other party is eliminated. There will be no solution to the conflict until its cause, the Zionist project, disappears and the Arab land is restored. ●

Day of the Land Celebrations

No to Occupation, No to Capitulation

On the eighth anniversary of the Day of the Land, our Palestinian masses in occupied Palestine renewed their commitment to the struggle and expressed their determination to remain on their land.

On this occasion, throughout all of Palestine, in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; in the Galilee, the Triangle and Naqab, the Palestinian voices were shouting slogans of unity against occupation and all its repressive racist policies. Other slogans were asserting the Palestinian strong will and determination to continue the struggle in all its forms till liberation. Also, slogans were raised condemning the practices of the right wing Palestinians and their deviating trend.

Prior to the Day of the Land various demonstrations and protests took place leading to the special events of the day. Our masses went out in the streets singing Palestinian national songs, raising Palestinian flags and burning tires to make road blocks. The occupation authorities, had admitted that the demonstrations were quite large. A Zionist military spokesperson admitted that three soldiers were wounded when their military car was hit by a hand grenade in the Jabaliyah camp in the Gaza Strip. At the same time, Palestinian sources asserted that seven Palestinian nationalists had been wounded by Zionist soldiers who fired at the camp residents who had gathered soon after the above mentioned incident.

At the same time, the Zionist soldiers fired at a demonstration in the Ein Beit Alma camp near Nablus, which led to the injury of two Palestinian youths, Naser and Hassan Mohammed Ahmad Saed. There were also various clashes between Palestinian nationalists and the Zionist authorities in the West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinian press agency in Jerusalem stated that the occupation authorities fired bullets and used tear gas to disperse mass demonstrations in the Aljalazoon camp near Ramalah, after camp residents closed the camp enterance with burning tires.

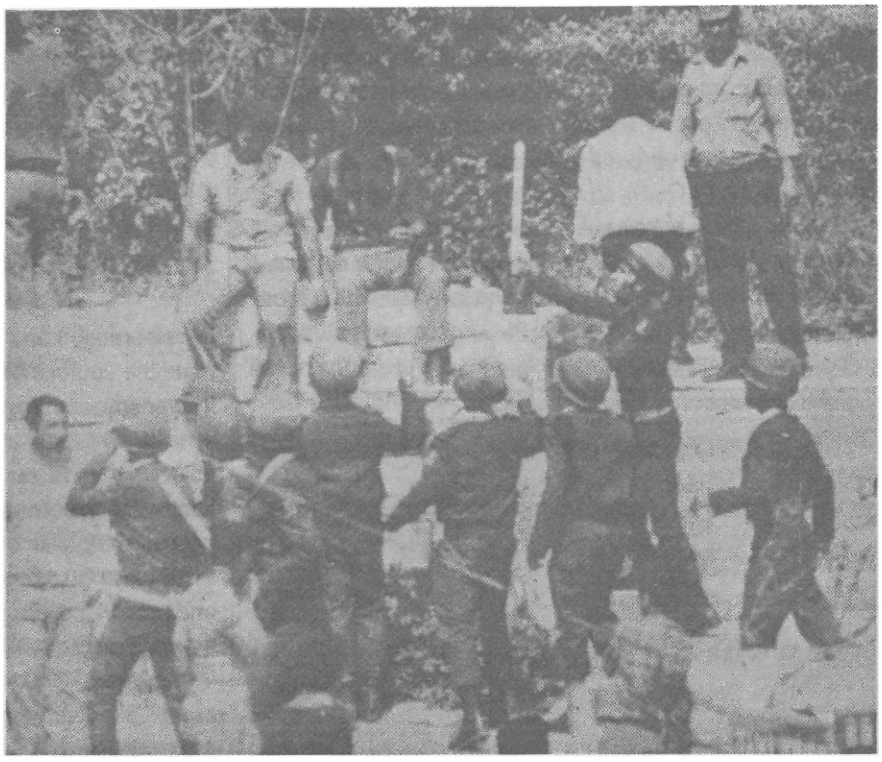
The agency also stated that a Palestinian student had been wounded in the town of Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem, when the enemy attempted to disperse demonstrators. The Zionist authorities admitted that they had ordered the closure of one of the secondary schools in the town, after the Israeli patrol cars had been stoned. The enemy also admitted that one of its soldiers had been injured when his patrol car was stoned in the town of Halhool near Hebron.

Simultaneously, the Zionist authorities conducted large scale arrests in the West Bank and Gaza, which were turned into Israeli military barracks as was described by the press agency.

Reports coming from the occupied territories stated that on the eve of the eighth anniversary of the Day of the Land, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were turned into real grounds of war. The report added that the Palestinian nationalists challenged the Israeli bullets with stones and iron rods. The report asserted that the Zionist military ruler of Nablus was injured when his car was bombarded with stones. Also, it was reported that the demonstrators used loud speakers to broadcast the national and folk songs.

In the town of Sikhnin, in the central Galilee, various demonstrations were held where Palestinian flags were raised. The enemy radio broadcast stated that the demonstrators closed all the main roads leading to the villages and towns of Galilee.

The people of Galilee demonstrate against repressive policies



Putting off fires of angry Palestinian masses

TIMED BOMBS:

In Jerusalem, a Zionist military spokesperson declared that experts had dismantled two bombs that were discovered shortly before they exploded. One of these bombs was found in a central car garage on the road to Bethlehem, while the other was discovered in the railroad station in Jerusalem. Soon after the news was revealed, the Zionists frantically warned of 'unfamiliar objects' which may contain bombs.

The occupation authorities increased their military presence in the West Bank and Gaza while helicopters were used to intimidate the nationalists and to repress all demonstrations. The enemy declared a state of emergency in the Galilee. According to Zionist sources, the authorities closed all roads connecting the 1967 occupied territories and the rest of the occupied lands in an attempt to stop the West Bank residents from participating in the Day of the Land celebrations in Galilee. Obviously, all their efforts were in vain.

THE 30th OF MARCH

At the dawn of March 30th, the Palestinian people started their celebrations. Demonstrators throughout the occupied homeland affirmed their united position to stand firm against all the enemy's repressive and oppressive measures. They vowed to continue their resistance of occupation and struggle for their national independence.

Inspite of the fact that the Zionist authorities had rallied more forces to repress the demonstrations and used all methods of terror, yet our masses rendered the enemy a heavy blow through their many large demonstrations. The sons and daughters of Palestine in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and Nazarath gathered to say in one united voice «no to occupation».

Throughout Galilee and the surrounding towns, three major demonstrations and rallies were held under the two main slogans of «It is the right of the Palestinian Arabs to have their own independent state» and «Israeli soldiers out of Lebanon».

The enemy, as usual, opened fire on the demonstrators in the various Palestinian cities and camps seriously injuring four nationalists of whom one was critically wounded. Palestinian sources in the occupied homeland stated that twenty five year old Ahmad Salman was critically wounded in the Balata camp near Nablus. In addition, the source stated that two others were injured in Jenin and a fourth Palestinian youth named Yaser Nizal (17), was wounded in Qabattiyah.

An Israeli TV cameraman was injured in the town of Sakhnin in the Galilee during one of the celebrations when attacked by the attendents after they warned him not to take their pictures.

Sakhnin witnessed a demonstration that marched through the streets of the town to the graveyards where three of the town's martyrs who were shot in the first celebration of the Day of the Land in 1976, were buried.

A similar demonstration took place in the town of al Tibah in Galilee, where the demonstrators sang 'Beladi...Beladi' (my country,my country), which is the PLO's national anthem. They also carried banners stating «the people of Palestine». The walls of the town were covered with slogans and Palestinian flags.

Also the village of Araba in Galilee witnessed similar demonstrations and according to a Zionist spokesperson, «many incidents took place in the Western Galilee, including arrests in the village of Baqat after its residents raised the Palestinian flag». The residents of the Golan Heights also participated in the demonstrations and rallies that took place in North Palestine.

Palestinian sources in the occupied homeland mentioned that the occupation authorities fired on demonstrations that were held in the camps of Balatta and Kalandia. The demonstrators confronted the Zionist forces with stones in various places in the West Bank and Galilee and raised the Palestinian flag in the middle of Nablus.

1,525 ARRESTS:

During two days, the number of the Palestinians arrested in the West Bank alone reached 724 individuals. Among them there were sixteen school and university female students, twenty seven

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CELEBRATION IN WEST BERLIN

On March 24th, a celebration was held in West Berlin in anticipation of the Day of the Land. It was sponsored by the General Union of Arab students and attended by large numbers of supporters of the Palestinian revolution, from among the Palestinian and Arab community and progressive Germans. The program included Palestinian national folkdance and song, as well as speeches delivered on behalf of the Palestinian revolution, the Lebanese National Movement and the Lebanese Communist Party. A common theme in the speeches was affirmation of the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and emphasis on the importance of unity in the PLO. All violations of the decisions of the Palestinian National Council were condemned, as was Arafat's visit to Cairo.

women of whom four were over the age of fifty five. The reports from the occupied land stated that these prisoners were transported in trucks to Al far'a prison near Nablus.

In the Gaza Strip, the number of prisoners reached 472, including seven women, one of them a sixty year old woman. There were also two female students and nine men over sixty years of age.

In the Triangle and Galilee, 329 nationalists were arrested, among them 13 girls and women.

The reports from the occupied lands estimated the enemy's loss in the West Bank, the Triangle, and Galilee, during these celebrations, to have exceeded one hundred destroyed cars. Among them are the cars of the military rulers of Nablus and Ramallah. In addition to that, the telephone lines in the settlements were all cut off and Zionist flags were burned. This is not to mention the number of soldiers that were wounded.

THE SECOND DAY OF THE DEMONSTRATIONS

Our masses with full strength carried their celebration through to the following day. Zionist sources admitted that for the second consecutive day, the army and police were engaged in direct confrontation with the demonstrators. These demonstrations and confrontations took place in Beir Zeit University near Ramallah, Kalandia camp near Jerusalem and Duhisha camp near Bethlehem. Palestinian sources mentioned that an Arab youth was injured by the enemy's bullets when they were trying to disperse the demonstration in Dahisha camp. The youth was Mirwan Amer al-Attar (14), and was taken to the Palestine Hospital for treatment.

According to news reporters, Beir Zeit University witnessed a tough battle with the occupation forces. The students built barricades of stones and burned tires at the university entrance, thereby closing the way in tront of the enemy. They were also chanting anti-occupation slogans and raised Palestinian flags. The occupation authorities closed the university area after seizing it, and ordered its closure. It also arrested many of its students and wounded one with bullets as they fired on the crowd of students.

During this time, the Gaza Islamic University was also experiencing similar activities and was also seized.

Indeed, the Day of the Land this year witnessed outstanding mass demonstrations and celebrations throughout all of the occupied lands. The heroic military operations that were carried out seperately by PFLP and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, were qualitative in nature. They both challenged and defeated all the enemy's security measures. The PFLP freedom fighters shelled the Zionist settlements in Galilee and seized a bus and DFLP commandos carried out the Jerusalem operations, making the grounds tremble under the feet of the Zionists.

The Day of the Land has always been the symbol of the unity of our Palestinian masses everywhere in spite of the great geographical distances of seperation. Our people especially under occupation through their daily resistance and the special activities of the Day of the Land affirmed their national identity and resistance to occupation. They were able to put an end to the Zionist false propaganda of «there is no such thing as Palestinians». The Day of the Land this year was full of resistance and demonstrations combined with two major military operations that affirmed our people's determination to continue their struggle till victory. The celebrations this year came to indicate that our people who have been denied their homeland and right of self-determination and have been subjected to the stick and carrot policy have not diverted from their national path. They stand united to challenge all those that deny their national identity, or claim it to themselves. ●

Women's Struggle in Occupied Palestine

Women's liberation is a matter of increasing importance in our time, for we live in the era of the victory of socialism, the era of the steady advance of national democratic liberation movements and the building of communist societies. Women's liberation is directly linked to this struggle; we cannot struggle for the people's liberation unless priority is given to women's liberation. On the other hand, women cannot achieve liberation through a simple campaign for change in old ideas and customs. It is not enough to demand freedom in choosing a husband, jobs and clothes, or to work in this or that association, committee or syndicate. The women's struggle must have a political, national and progressive orientation aimed at changing the economic conditions which subjugate both men and women.

Women in general suffer class oppression as well as oppression by the men. In addition, the Palestinian woman suffers national oppression due to the imperialist-supported Zionist invasion and occupation of Palestine, which inflicted grave political, economic, social and cultural destruction on Palestinian society. From the beginning, Palestinian women realized that this national and class oppression fell equally on Palestinian men. Thus, Palestinian women worked side-by-side with men against the common enemy, postponing the conflicts that might arise between them for the sake of the main aim: liberating Palestine and establishing a democratic society as a major step towards women's full liberation.

The Palestinian people have firmly faced many challenges and conspiracies aimed at eliminating their identity and just rights. The Zionist invaders, upon occupying major parts of Palestine in 1948, worked in accordance with a planned policy to take possession of the land by expelling the original inhabitants and enacting Judaization. A major component of this poicy was destroying the Palestinian economic infrastructure by imposing restrictions on agriculture, industry, marketing and education. Moreover, laws were made to prevent the founding of national associations and syndicates, and to disband the existing ones. The same policy was later applied in the remaining parts of Palestine which were occupied in 1967.

Confronting these challenges and conspiracies requires the recruitment and mobilization of all the potentials of the Palestinian people, of whom women compose roughly the half. The Palestinian woman's contribution has been significant; she spared no effort to serve her people, country and cause. This was based on her strong belief in the people's ability to face these challenges, despite Zionism's massive aggression and imperialist support. The Palestinian woman's struggle has progressed from being partial and instinctive, to being overall and organized. Women's participation has taken a variety of forms, including armed struggle.

The Palestinian woman's struggle, as part of her people's struggle, has passed through three main stages corresponding to the following periods: (1) The beginning of the Zionist invasion of Palestine until the formation of the Zionist entity in 1948, (2) 1948 until June 1967, (3) the contemporary Palestinian national liberation revolution.

Stage one: Prior to the formation of the Zionist entity

In 1884, Palestinian women were among the peasants who acted to uproot the first agricultural settlement which the Zionists tried to build near Affouleh. This was an early indication of women's social and national-political awareness. After World War I and the results represented by the Sykes-Picot agreement and then the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, the Palestinian woman's awareness increased. In 1920, women actively participated in demonstrations and strikes protesting the colonial plans against the Palestinian Arab people and demanding cancellation of the Balfour Declaration. In 1921, women made a qualitative advance by establishing the first women's union, headed by vanguard women like Melia Sakakin and Zalikha Shehabi. This union played a major role in organizing women's efforts and in demonstrations demanding a halt to Zionist colonization in Palestine. During the 1929 revolt, Palestinian women participated in the demonstrations where many were martyred, such as Jamile Azaar, Aisha Abu Hasan and Azba Salame.

In 1928, the Arab Women's Association was founded as a Palestinian association to work side by side with the men in the common struggle. The founders were Khadije Hussein, Tarab Abdul Hadi, Zakia Budeiri, Wadiha Khalidi, who chaired the association. In October 1929, a women's conference was held in Jerusalem. Hundreds of women participated and condemned the repressive British measures. The conference sent cables to the King of Britain and the United Nations. A delegation of fourteen women was formed and met the British High Commissioner, requesting cancellation of the Balfour Declaration, a halt to Zionist immigration to Palestine, the discharge of the Zionist British Deputy, the release of prisoners, and a halt to torture and aggression against the Palestinian people.

In 1936, the women's struggle took new forms in the context of the famous general strike, which lasted six months. Women started collecting and distributing material and financial aid to the rebels and to the families of martyrs and prisoners; they sewed clothes, bought and transported weapons, carried food and water to the rebels fighting in the mountains and administered first aid. On June 25, 1936, Fatima Gazal became the first Palestinian woman to be martyred in combat; ▶

she was killed in a battle with British soldiers at Wadi Azzoun.

In 1942, women's solidarity associations were formed with branches in the main cities. In 1947, upon the UN's adoption of the partition plan, she was alongside the Palestinian man building barricades and fortifications, digging trenches, transporting weapons and forming more associations, like the one called Daisy Flower in Jaffa, which provided medical care, food and water to those fighting to defend the land. Members of this association included Yusra Toukan, Fatima Abdul Huda, Juhenia Khorshid and Arabia Khorshid. Women also joined the fighters in their attacks. Many were martyred, including Juliet Zakka, Jamile Ahmad, Deba Atyeh and Helwe Zaidan. The latter had taken the gun of her husband after he and their son were martyred; she continued shooting at the Zionist gangs until her martyrdom on April 9, 1948. On April 10, 1948, Hayat Balbisi, who taught school in Deir Yassin, upon hearing of the massacre there, left her parents' house in Jerusalem and hurried to the village. There she was martyred while helping the people and protecting school children from the Zionists' savage artillery.

Stage two: May 1948 - June 1967

Women's struggle, like the entire Palestinian national movement, suffered a recession after 1948. The reasons are obvious: the partition of Palestine, with the Zionists occupying the major portion, the West Bank annexed to Jordan, and the Gaza Strip placed under Egyptian administration. The reasons for the recession can also be traced to the nature of the leading Palestinian national bourgeoisie, whose interests were now directly linked to either the Jordanian or Egyptian regime.

A new characteristic of this stage was that women began to join political movements, but this was minimal and limited to women with higher education. In general, women's activities in this period were charitable and social endeavors, with some superficial political work. Still, gains were made in the 1948 occupied territories, and more women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip responded to educational opportunities.

Upon the occupation, the constirictions imposed on women in the traditional society were compounded by the restrictions imposed on all Palestinians in the Zionist state, which perpetuated the British Emergency Defense Regulations to control the population under occupation. The Zionists aimed to make the Palestinian Arabs ignorant; social activities, clubs and national associations were prohibited, while avenues to continuing education were blocked. Roughly the same policy, in different forms, was applied by the Jordanian regime in the West Bank.

In the 1948 occupied land, Palestinian women encountered difficult economic conditions. They could not be employed in the productive sector and were generally barred from higher education. Thus, women tended towards agriculture and marginal jobs. Their social and political activities were limited to those of a few who were able to work through the Communist Party, Rakah. In the early sixties, more women managed to continue their education. At the same time, the founding of Al Ard (The Land) movement afforded an independent Palestinian political framework. Women immediately joined this movement, and some like Najaa al Asmar rose to leading positions.

In the Gaza Strip, the women's role was minimal due to the economic and social backwardness prevailing there. Yet they participated in demonstrations: in 1954, protesting against the project to resettle Palestinians in the Sinai desert; in February 1955, protesting the Israeli attack on the Gaza railway station; on March 7, 1957, after the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, which had been occupied during the 1956 tripartite aggression on Egypt. Women also participated in the continuous one-week demonstration which helped to foil the plan to internationalize the Gaza Strip.

In this period, women also participated in the big demonstrations in the West Bank against the imperialist-reactionary plan to form the Baghdad pact. This demonstration was prohibited and brutally attacked by the Jordanian regime, resulting in the martyrdom of many, including Raja Abu Amashe. Many others were arrested in similar demonstrations, such as Widad Qumri, Suad Hureish, Nahil Oweida.

In the Gaza Strip, women displayed greater interest in educational opportunities, this being allowed by the Egyptian regime. Thus, their employment opportunities began gradually improving with the possibility of becoming a teacher, doctor, engineer or social assistant. This gave women new and broader prospects for joining the national struggle alongside the men.

In 1964, the General Union of Palestinian Women was founded, after the establishment of the PLO. This allowed a greater number of women to participate. Through the Union, many women attended the Palestinian National Council held in Jerusalem at that time. The union held its first congress in Jerusalem in 1965, and branches were set up in many cities and villages of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Later in 1966, upon the Jordanian regime's decision to close all PLO associations, the union was closed. Yet it continued to function secretly through associations and operating sewing centers, as well as first aid and nursing courses, and political and cultural sessions.

Stage three: The 1967 occupation and the rise of the Palestinian Resistance

After occupying the remaining parts of Palestine, the Zionists started once more enacting their plans to empty the land of its inhabitants; more Palestinian families were displaced, mainly to neighboring Arab countries. Under military rule, political, social and ideological activities were prohibited for Palestinians, while their land was confiscated. There were laws aiming to make the population ignorant, interference in education and prevention of employment opportunities, to

push Palestinians to emigrate. Students were arrested prior to exams, teachers expelled and universities closed. There were efforts to rob and distort the Palestinian national heritage. Later, on the political level, the so-called civil administration was imposed, while the national associations and municipalities were repeatedly attacked.

Nevertheless, Palestinian women played a greater role in the national struggle in this period. This was basically a continuation of their previous role, yet with broader activities and greater commitment. It was now clear that the national cause was a question of the very existence of the Palestinian people as a whole. Furthermore, the rise of the Palestinian resistance organizations gave new inspiration and opportunities for struggle. In this period, Palestinian women's struggle within the revolution was characterized by the following:

a) Women participating in all fields: political, ideological, military, economic, social, educational, cultural.

b) Broader participation by an increasing number of women in activities everywhere, whereas such participation had previously been limited to vanguards. This was especially marked in the 1948 occupied territories, where the struggle there was now linked to the overall Palestinian struggle.

c) Leadership passed to politically educated and working women of the lower strata of the petit bourgeoisie.

d) A rise in women's motivation to struggle.

e) Broader participation of women in rural areas, which are most endangered and in sharpest confrontation with the Zionist plans to confiscate the land, expell the population and build settlements.

f) Attention given to women's liberation by the leftist organizations, and more support to their general and personal social matters.

Military activity

Women were active militarily as compared to the foregoing periods and the traditional role of the Arab woman. Yet this was still limited to a number of vanguards. In addition to storage and transport of weapons, women now started to carry out operations. In October 1967, Fatima Bernawi was arrested after planting a bomb in a cinema in Tel Aviv. On November 21, 1968, Shadia Abu Ghazale was martyred while preparing a time bomb; she was the first woman martyr at this stage. In February 1969, a number of women (Rasmieh Odeh, Aisha Odeh, Mariam Shakshir, Latifa Hawari, Rashide Obeid) were arrested, accused of planning and executing two of the greatest military operations at that time: the explosion at the Supersol supermarket and the attempted explosion at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Women such as Leila Khaled, Amine Dahbour and Therese Halasa participated in special operations. Other women were arrested while transporting weapons, like Abla Taha. Women played a great role in the experience of the early seventies in the Gaza Strip, when the freedom fighters controlled the Strip by night. Women also took part in attacks on Israeli patrols, throwing molotov coctails and stones, which is considered a new form of resistance by many observers. In July 1968, many women were arrested in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, accused of aiding the resistance fighters. Others were expelled: Isam Abdul Hadi, Abla Taha, Huda Abdul Hadi and Nawal Titi. During 1968, the number of women in Nablus prison reached sixty, forming 20% of the inmates. Women prisoners were subjected to monsterous physical and psychological torture.

Women campaign against illiteracy

Political activities

Realizing that a conscious, organized, leading role cannot be maintained unless guided by revolutionary organization, women began to join the organizations of the Palestinian Resistance, as well as forming women's unions, syndicates, clubs, associations and social committees.

Women became more active in demonstrations. The most outstanding was that of April 1968, in Jerusalem, where women dressed in black protested against the planned Israeli military exposition. Women have been active in the mass uprisings and strikes, in distributing political publications and slogan-writing on the walls. Women were active in the first Land Day demonstration in the Galilee in 1976, when Khadije Shawahne was martyred. Other women have been martyred in demonstrations of solidarity with political prisoners, and protesting the Sabra-Shatila massacre: Lina Nabulsi, Muntaha Hourani, Taghrid Batmeh, Ihsan Abu Draz, Maysoun Kastanawi, Aziza Hussein, Elham Shahbari. Many others were wounded. In a month of mass uprisings from March 12th to April 12th, 1982, sixty women were wounded, while the number of women imprisoned rose to 150.

Economic activities

The number of working women has increased during the last ten years and reached 17% of working-age women. Women carry out a major part of the agricultural work. Increasing interest in higher education can be noted, giving women more employment opportunities. The percentage of women doctors, engineers, teachers and other professionals has

increased, allowing women to demand equality in wages and benefits. This also advanced women's participation in syndicates, and the founding of new associations and committees, such as the Women's Work Committee, the Working Women's Committee and the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees.

Social activities

Palestinian women have managed to change some of the old traditions, such as the wearing of veils and adornment, and choosing a husband. Women were active in starting youth centers, clubs, summer camps, kindergartens, nurseries, literacy campaigns, political and cultural debates, and nursing and first aid courses. Women have given great attention to the families of martyrs and prisoners, and formed various committees to this purpose. A noticeable social phenomenon is marriages between Palestinians of the 1948 occupied territories and those of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Another such phenomenon is refusal to marry outside the occupied territories, especially if this would impose emigration. Women have also defined social relations on a correct basis, promoting discussion of important political and economic questions, rather than gossip and talk about the latest fashions. Through all of this, women have managed to gradually change the old view of women as being only fit for housework.

Cultural activities

Women have played a great role in raising cultural awareness among the Palestinian people and protecting the national heritage. Many committees were formed to preserve traditional handicrafts, and magazines are published, such as *The Heritage and Society Magazine.* Women have engaged in literary activities, writing stories and poems, and working in the press. Women have contributed to art through paintings and sculpture. They participate in folkdancing and song groups, and have been active in the initiation of theater groups. Women have also devoted attention to organizing libraries and engaged in literary, historical and social research.

Conclusions and tasks

Through this preliminary survey of the struggle of Palestinian women, we can conclude the following:

1. The struggle of Palestinian women is directly linked to the overall situation of the Palestinian people's cause and revolution. It is affected by the crises, wars and conspiracies from which our people suffer, and especially by the Zionist occupation, which has left its mark on every aspect of Palestinian society.

2. The number of working women, their participation in syndicates, and their initiation of associations andcommittees, is on the increase.

3. There is responsiveness to academic and professional education.

4. The leadership has passed from national bourgeoisie to politically educated and working women from the lower strata of the petit bourgeoisie. Related to this, the nature of women's activities has changed from being charity-oriented to more comprehensive struggle.

5. Despite relative development, the man's view of the role of women is still superficial. Men still try to confine women to housework, which limits her freedom and paralyzes her abilities.

6. Despite the attention of some leftist organizations to support the women's struggle, this is below the required level. The organizations' intentions are not reinforced by programs based on comprehensive study of women's problems and the means for resolving them. This retards the advance of the women's movement and the emergence of women with leadership experience, capable of holding key positions in the associations in the occupied territories.

7. Women's participation in the military field has been limited to a number of vanguards.

8. Energies are scattered among a great number of women's frameworks.

The Palestinian revolution in general, and women in particular, have urgent tasks inorder to promote the advance of the women's struggle in the occupied territories:

1. Ideological struggle against old customs and beliefs regarding women and their role and against the laws of the reactionary Arab regimes and the Zionist occupation which perpetuate a backward attitude towards women (those governing inheritance, wages, polygamy, divorce, etc.). The revolutionary organizations must adopt women's issues through proper study of their situation and struggle experience, in order to develop this experience and spread awareness of their real role in the society.

2. Programs must be drawn up, based on thorough study among women, to provide proper solutions for daily problems through child care and employment opportunities, especially in productive fields, and for the training of women cadres.

3. Unifying efforts must be made to avoid political divisions within mass organizations. Also, quality must be given priority over quantity when establishing committees and service facilities, such as kindergartens.

4. Developing existing projects and starting more productive cooperative projects, as this would reduce unemployment and in turn emigration, while recruiting more women into the labor force.

5. Linking the women's question to the national question on the basis of a progressive orientation; pressuring the national progressive forces to devote greater attention to women's issues.

6. Concentrating efforts to increase women's participation in the struggle against the Zionist enemy, especially the armed struggle. ●

Hunger Strike in Askelon

PFLP holds the Zionist entity responsible for the outcome of the political prisoners' strike in Askelon prison.

Due to the difficult conditions that exist in the prisons of the Zionist occupation, the Palestinian militants in Askelon prison declared a hunger strike on March 5th, to last until the prison administration responds to their just demands. Their demands can be summarized as follows:

1. Provision of the minimum requirements for living in the prisons. This includes food, clothing and sunbreaks.

2. Allowing the relatives of the political prisoners to make regular biweekly visits and increasing the duration of the visit.

3. Stopping the campaign of arbitrary transfers from one prison to another, a practice which has become almost daily.

4. Separation of the political prisoners from the criminal prisoners in Damoun, Neve Tertza, Ramle and Shatta prisons.

5. Provision of medical treatment in all prisons, in particular Askelon.

6. Breaking the isolation imposed on the Japanese militant, Komozo Okonoto, who is in Ramle prison. From his imprisonment in 1972, until the present, he has been in solitary confinement, chained, tortured and forbidden to have visitors.

The Palestinian militants also emphasized that their hunger strike is in solidarity with the women in Neve Tertza prison, who have been refusing work since May 1983.

The PFLP appeals to international public opinion, and to the international organizations that defend human rights, to undertake their duty by putting pressure on the occupation authorities to fulfill the demands of our militants in Askelon prison. Moreover, the PFLP holds the Zionist entity totally responsible for whatever results from this strike, which threatens the life of our militants. ●

Women Strikers Win

The hunger strike in Askelon prison ended, but struggle for similar demands goes on in many jails. On March 6th, the women in Neve Tertza prison declared a hunger strike in anticipation of International Women's Day. This served to dramatize the work strike they have been waging since May 1983, refusing to cook and serve the guards. The escalation of the strike was apparently the last straw for the prison administration which has unsuccessfully tried to break the work strike with punishments and brutality. Instead, the women continued. Through their determination, they elicited sustained solidarity from outside the prison. The unprecendently broad support given by democratic Israeli women's organizations, and the efficient role of the women's lawyers, has brought their case to public attention inside occupied Palestine and abroad. Accordingly, attention was also focused on the prison administration's brutality, as when the women were teargased in their cells on October 3rd.

So, this time, the prison administration tried to get the women to send a delegation in hopes of getting them to end the strike. The women, however, have boycotted any contact with the authorities since the teargasing, and thus refused to send a delegation. Instead, they demanded the return of their library which had earlier been confiscated as punishment for the work strike. Finally, this demand was fulfilled, and the women sent a delegation to discuss with the prison governor. Agreement was reached that the women would not be forced to do unreasonable kitchen duty, or to serve or clean up after the guards and police. At the same time, the prisoners' rights to newspapers, books and radios were recognized and restored.

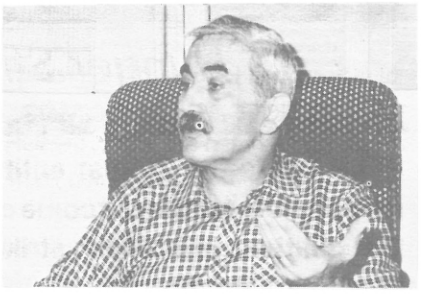
The victory of the women political prisoners in Neve Tertza, who attained all their demands in this round, points to two elements which are the key to victories in prison strikes generally: First, the organization and determination of the prisoners' themselves, and second, broad, active solidarity from outside the prison. The victory at Neve Tertza should thus be a motivation for escalated solidarity with all political prisoners in occupied Palestine.

Torture factory

Currently, an important focus for solidarity with political prisoners is Fara'a detention center, near Nablus, which was established by the Israeli authorities in 1982, especially for youthful «offenders», i.e. demonstrators and political activists. Heavy torture is applied on detainees awaiting trial, in line with the Zionist authorities' frantic attempts to snuff out the mass demonstrations and stone-throwing which prevail in the occupied territories. At present there are about 150 detainees in this center, which is run by the military police, with a close section run by Shin Bet. As a result of many cases of reported torture, the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights held a press conference in late March, where Secretary Joseph Algazi accused the authorities of torture and brutality and termed Fara'a «a factory for extracting confessions» ●

Significance of the Aden Meeting

An Interview with Comrade George Habash



The following is an interview with Comrade George Habash, General Secretary of the PFLP, in which he explains to the staff of «Al Hadaf» and «Democratic Palestine», the significance of the agreement reached in Aden between the PFLP-DFLP Joint Leadership, the Palestinian Liberation Front and the Palestinian Communist Party. Comrade Habash expressed great optimism that the results of this meeting will exert positive influence on the efforts to resolve the crisis in the PLO.

How do you evaluate the Aden declaration in the light of the crisis in the PLO?

Actually, more important than the declaration is the long, serious discussion that took place regarding the crisis in the Palestinian arena and the PLO, and how to deal with this... In this respect, we can register a very great achievement: the clarification and unification of the points of view of the Joint Leadership, together with the Palestinian Liberation Front and the Palestinian Communist Party, on the Palestinian problems and how to resolve them.

This takes us back to Arafat's visit to Cairo on December 22, 1983, and its implications as a dangerous, new, qualitative deviation, whereby Arafat tried to pull the PLO towards his own position. At that time, there was agreement in the Joint Leadership regarding the danger of this step, its political aims and implications. The overall position was to condemn and strongly confront this step.

After that, in light of the dangerous situation resulting from Arafat's visit, it was natural that, for a period of time, some tactical differences existed concerning the position to be adopted in order to truly foil this step. The most important achievement in Aden was that the Joint Leadership, along with the Palestinian Liberation Front and the Palestinian Communist Party, united their points of view regarding a variety of tactical issues facing us after Arafat's visit to Cairo. This achievement has become an asset in our hands, which in my view is a great accomplishment.

You are probably aware of the many speculations that have circulated, even in the PFLP's leadership and among our rank-and-file and the masses supporting us, about the experience of the Joint Leadership. In all honesty, I should say that prior to the discussion in Aden...we were quite worried that differences might continue, which would have had a negative impact on the Joint Leadership experience. When thinking of the possibility that differences would continue and have a negative impact on the Joint Leadership experience, I felt a great objective responsibility. This led me to the necessity of thinking further to find ways of resolving the differences that existed.

In our analysis of the crisis of the Palestinian resistance, even prior to our departure from Beirut, as was clearly stated in the Political Report of our 4th congress, we believe that overcoming the crisis is conditional on the growth of the revolutionary democratic forces and their influence in the Palestinian revolution and the PLO.

Now I can express my immense satisfaction, because the recent discussion in Aden ended with uniting the points of view concerning the political questions now facing us. This has revived anew our hope in the success of the Joint Leadership experience, and the experience of the revolutionary democratic trend on the Palestinian level. Such unification is a guarantee for continuing the revolution.

I have made this long introduction because the importance of the discussions and results in Aden goes way beyond the political declaration issued by the meeting.

What about the initiative which the group of four (PFLP, DFLP, PLF, PCP) presented to the Central Committee of Fatah?

Fatah's Central Committee, via the Yemeni Socialist Party, presented us (the four) with a working paper to be the basis of discussion. We read this paper carefully. We in the PFLP, as well as our comrades in the DFLP, felt that it in no way addressed the questions existing in the Palestinian arena. Most eye-catching was that it completely ignored Arafat's visit to Cairo, as if it had never happened. It was necessary for the members of Fatah's Central Committee to realize that Arafat's visit to Cairo is the major cause of the disruption of Palestinian unity. This paper should have dealt with the visit, stating a clear position on this and how to deal with its results. We were aghast to see that this paper ignored the visit which has raised a

major question: Does Arafat, after this dangerous deviation, remain to be the common denominator for bringing the Palestinian arena together?

After this dangerous deviation, is it possible for Arafat to establish the necessary relations with the progressive and nationalist regimes? Here in particular, I mean Syria, which is confronting the imperialist plans, the Reagan and Camp David formulas. How can we unite the Palestinian arena, and establish national and progressive alliances on the Arab and international levels, with Arafat remaining as the head of the PLO? The more I think about this subject, I find that correcting the existing situation in the PLO, uniting it and enabling it to establish national and progressive alliances, has become conditional on Arafat's stepping down. I can no longer see how it is possible to cement internal Palestinian relations, Syrian-Palestinian relations, or Palestinian-Lebanese nationalist relations without his stepping down.

The question here is not Arafat personally, but rather the trend that he represents. I hope that this subject can be fully understood. During the battle of Beirut and in the PNC's 16th session, when Arafat was moving in the framework of the national platform, we accorded him his due respect as the symbol of the Palestinian revolution. Yet, after the Cairo visit and its aftermath, can Arafat remain as the common denominator for uniting the Palestinian arena? It is impossible for him to unite the Palestinian national forces and masses with the course he has taken. Our Palestinian masses will never accept Arafat's alliance with the Camp David regime or with the reactionary Jordanian regime, or that he wages a battle against Syria while Syria is confronting the imperialist-Zionist plans.

There is no indication that Arafat is willing to reverse this trend. On the contrary, all signs point to his deep involvement in this deviationist trend. Thus, the paper of Fatah's Central Committee is very strange and surprising. Moreover, Arafat's visit provided the door whereby the Camp David regime returned to the Islamic Summit. For the paper not to refer to this is like demanding our consent to this result, as well as to the joint communique issued by Arafat and the Jordanian regime. If we examine this joint communique carefully, we find that every statement is for a solution to the Palestinian question via alliance with the reactionary Arab regimes. Also, on organizational questions, the working paper of Fatah's Central Committee contained things that were very strange and surprising to us. Yet realizing the importance of Fatah's Central Committee and of dealing with it on a clear nationalist basis, the participants in the Aden meeting agreed on proposing a political and organizational platform whereby future relations can be established with Fatah's Central Committee.

We think that this is the only basis for guaranteeing the unity of the Palestinian arena, if we all want to deal with the internal problems in a serious way that can guarantee the PLO's unity. The specific political and organizational points agreed on in Aden leave no room for equivocation... For example, on the political level, we want a clear, public condemnation of Arafat's visit to Cairo. The Fatah Central Committee's statement after the visit considered it a personal initiative without dealing with its political repercussions, which became the door for Egypt's reentry to the Islamic Summit. Arafat and some of his Central Committee members considered the reconvening of the Jordanian parliament and the appointment of deputies for the West Bank, to be an internal Jordanian affair, etc.

We want a clear nationalist position to be defined regarding the reactivation of the Jordanian parliament and the Arafat-Jordanian declaration, as well as regarding the return of the Egyptian regime and relations with it, in a way that ends all connections, on all levels, with this regime. This means the application of the resolutions of the PNC's 16th session.

On the organizational level, we want Arafat brought to account for his visit to Cairo, and what followed of organizational violations which ignored the legitimate bodies of the PLO and the PNC resolutions. Organizationally speaking, these and similar things prevent Arafat from being the common denominator for uniting the Palestinian revolution. The points which we put forth to Fatah's Central Committee stress the importance of agreement, prior to the next PNC, between the Palestinian organizations and other components of the PLO, on the formation of leadership bodies that guarantees the participation of all nationalist organizations. Moreover, we stressed that a comprehensive national consensus is required prior to convening the PNC.

We want a clear answer to the following question: Will Fatah's Central Committee accept Arafat's chosen course of counting on the Arab regimes that are allied with the US and its plans? We will not accept a vague answer. Does Fatah's Central Committee condemn or accept Arafat's trend?

We are fed up with words and elastic expressions... Arafat was entrusted with the PNC's resolutions and he betrayed them. What is the position of on him? We will not accept a vague answer. We and the DFLP have agreed on a clear position: that he is no longer the common denominator for uniting the Palestinians. We will not compromise on this subject. This is the position of the Joint Leadership, the democratic alliance (the four), and all nationalist forces in the Palestinian arena with the exception of Arafat and those who stand with him.

If this is the case, why didn't the Aden declaration mention the resignation of Arafat?

The declaration is a general one, stressing the basic political issues. It can be considered a summary of the discussion. The declaration affirmed the unity of the PLO on a progressive and nationalist basis. The second point stressed the specific position against the deviation. Another point emphasized the necessity of uniting the revolution against the deviationist trend. It also emphasized the joint Soviet-Syrian declaration as a sound basis for building alliances on the Arab and national level. The political declaration refers to the general matters that determine our joint tactics and positions.

▶

Comrades Ali Naser Mohammed,George Habash and Nayef Hawatmeh

There was prior agreement between the four organizations regarding our position towards Arafat. This was expressed in the joint communique issued right after the visit. As I mentioned, more important than the political declaration is the results reached that will unite and determine our tactics in the coming stage; the essence of this will be seen in the near future.

How do you define the platform of the broad national front mentioned in the declaration?

We should evaluate the Aden meeting in terms of two aspects: First, uniting the points of view of the Joint Leadership and the democratic trend in a way that guarantees the alliance between these forces, which was achieved. Second is the question of uniting the Palestinian arena and restoring the Palestinian revolution's central role in the confrontation against imperialism. In this respect, we found that the point of departure is confronting the deviationist policies. Doing this successfully will enable us to restore unity in the Palestinian arena, as well as the alliances needed at the present time. To confront, isolate and eliminate this deviation, we must unite the efforts of all forces: organizations, unions, nationalist personalities, etc... Therefore, we must form an active national front aimed at isolating and eliminating the deviation, and thereby protecting the unity of the PLO on a progressive nationalist basis.

It is known that the forces opposing deviation differ in terms of the level of their opposition. Is the national front open to all these forces, or is it proposed for the more radical forces?

We are really aiming for the broadest possible national front to confront the deviation. In the next few days, we will be coducting dialogue with all organizations without exception: the uprising (Fatah rebels), Saiqa, General Command, the Palestinian Struggle Front, the mass organizations and nationalist personalities to discuss the formation of the national front against deviation. We want to establish the broadest possible front to accomodate all forces opposing the deviationist trend. Can this front avoid taking a position on the trend represented by Arafat and the steps he has taken on this path? The answer is no.

Yet for the sake of rallying the broadest front possible, we can probably meet on basis of political and organizational condemnation of this visit to Cairo, knowing well that when the front is asked about this subject, the answer will be in the way we have expressed earlier on many occasions.

As for the basis on which this front will be founded, be it its program or organizational bylaws, it is the right of all those who express their desire to join, to also participate in putting such programs. Perhaps we will propose a draft program, but it is not our right to impose any program on anyone. Yet there are some essential matters which must be taken into consideration in the initiation of any program or organizational bylaws.

1. That this front is not an alternative to the PLO, but rather a

front within and based on the PLO. Its goal is uniting the PLO on a national basis. It is the means to rally all national forces within the PLO to rectify its path of operation. Thus, in our view, this issue is not subject to individual interpretations or compromise. We will not participate in founding a new PLO or push this trend to take the form of an alternative PLO. The deviating trend is fully responsible for anything that may take place in the ways of splits or dismantling within the PLO arena. We will under no condition take any responsibility regarding this matter.

2. We will not establish bodies or institutions parallel to those of the PLO. This point is implicit in the first point, but I wanted to emphasize and clarify it.

3. This front is open to all without exception. It is for all concerned parties who are willing to fight the capitulationist and deviating trend in the Palestinian arena.

The deviating party is suffering from confusion due to the fact that they thought they would win legitimacy, if they moved fast. Yet the developments that followed Arafat's visit to Cairo, especially the nationalist victories in Lebanon, and the growing size of the Palestinian national opposition, showed the deviating party that they are facing a tough battle. How do you view the dilemma facing the deviators?

After Arafat's visit to Cairo, a very big thing happenned. I consider it the primary factor in answering this question. The great victories in Lebanon represented by the liberation of West Beirut, the abrogation of the May 17th agreement and the humiliating pull out of the multi-national forces. A great victory took place that provides a political answer regarding what is taking place on the Palestinian and Arab levels. This victory affirms that the position of steadfastness and confrontation taken against imperialism, the continuation of the armed struggle and mass mobilization, and not betting on the US imperialism and Arab reaction is the only line that can lead to results in favour of the nationalist forces.

In addition, another great thing happenned that pointed to the end of the road for those that bet on the US and Arab reaction. The US, in spite of its might and warships, was incapable of standing up to this decisive confrontation with the Lebanese nationalists and Syria. The US was incapable of protecting itself and its reactionary allies in Lebanon. All this has had an impact on the outcome of the struggle taking place between the two lines in the Palestinian arena: between the line of steadfastness and confrontation that is determined to continue the revolution and the deviating and capitulationist line. Is this outcome really clear to the leaders of the capitulationist trend? Are these clear results going to lead the symbols of the capitulationist trend to condemn themselves and think of returning to the nationalist position? The answer is no; this is clear in the explanations and evaluations they offer regarding these victories. They don't consider these achievements as victories, and they believe that the course of events in Lebanon is going along with the Israeli plans of dividing Lebanon. This is an indication that these deviating elements are determined to continue their path. After answering this question, I want to say that the battle with the deviating line, in spite of these positive developments, is a very hard and long battle that we must not underestimate. We can't rely solely on the objective developments. Rather we must combine this with extensive, subjective, well-planned efforts, if we are to celebrate the burial of the deviationist and capitulationist trend, whereby the PLO can regain its effective and influential power in confronting its enemies on the Palestinian, Arab and international levels, and regain its strength to achieve the national goals.

Any quick evaluation of the struggle between the two lines indicates that the course of events is in favor of the nationalist line due to two main factors: the objective developments and the subjective efforts.

What pleases me the most in this course of events is how it relates to our Palestinian masses in the occupied land. They have always raised Arafat's pictures as the symbol of the Palestinian nationalist forces. I was afraid they would find it difficult to comprehend the extent and danger of this deviating step into which Arafat attempted to drag the Palestinians. Yet our Palestinian masses are guided by their national feelings and rich experience of struggle against the Camp David trend and its regime.They are also fully aware of the threat posed by the Jordanian regime to the Palestinian revolution. They have experienced the specific Jordanian policies regarding the occupied lands, be it regarding the delegations to Jordan, the university teachers' petitions, the municipalities on their position on the civil administration. Based on all this experience, our masses have proved that they stand firm on their national cause and are not tied to this symbol or that in the PLO leadership.

What is needed is continuous daily efforts to end the deviating trend - our tool for this is the broad national front which will bring an end to this trend and protect the PLO and its unity on a national basis.

There are indications that the capitulationist party is rapidly preparing for a PNC session, what is your position regarding this?

This question gives us the opprtunity to state that the joint leadership and its allies on the Palestinian level regard their participation in the next PNC as conditional on Palestinian leadership meetings that define a sound, political line for the PLO which is not subject to individual interpretation. They also regard their participation as conditional on agreement being made concerning the organizational questions, meaning the question of the Palestinian leadership of the PLO and its executive committee and central council.It is also conditional onthe honesty and effectivity of these bodies in translating the written agreement so it brings an end to the tragedy of individualism and failure, so we can be sure that we have completely eliminated the diseases. ▶

We will not suffice by programs alone, because this matter has existed since the year of 1979. We want to make sure that the tools of implementation of these programs are effective.

I don't propose this to complicate matters. I propose this because of my desire to celebrate - in the next PNC - the formation of Palestinian bodies which will eliminate and for ever bury the trend that led to the existing diseases within the Palestinian arena.

We will not accept less than a joint effective leadership and a clear national program that can be practically implemented and not just a written one. We have had our share of suffering from tragedies and diseases.

In your estimates, what is the extent of the battle waged for legitimacy in the realms of the existing struggles in the Palestinian arena?

In regards to the battle of legitimacy, the Aden agreement included a point to cover this issue in its full extent. We are not pessimistic as for the outcome of this battle . We know well that 125 members of the PNC have condemned Arafat's visit and 86 of them asked for his resignation. This force, when it works within the Palestinian circle, through the mass organizations and bodies - can its efforts and the outcomes in winning the legitimacy be undermined? It is true that these bodies to a great extent are made in «Arafat's kitchen». We don't ignore this fact, but on the other hand, we must realize our people's historical experiences, and we must realize that it is difficult for these bodies or the majority of them to agree on the deviation trend or the US path.

In the PNC's 16th session, we all know that Arafat had reservations regarding the point of dealing with the Reagan's initiative. We all know his position: he advised the political committee to draft the program in his ambiguous «La'am» (which means yes and no at the same time). This would mean that we neither accepted nor refused the Reagan plan. But we all know and evaluate the program from the 16th session of the PNC as drafted on a nationalist basis which cornered America's Palestinians. This is an important point which we must take into consideration, when we evaluate waging the battle for legitimacy and chances of winning it. But I want to draw attention to the fact that the battle for legitimacy may be one in two directions:

- To win the legitimacy through the bodies and have the nationalist forces prevail.
- To stop Arafat from speaking on behalf of the legitimacy and I want to clarify this point:

Why did the joint leadership abstain from taking part in the executive committee meetings after Arafat's visit to Cairo? Is it a position just to record in history? Is it a just reaction?

We all know the make up of the executive committee and that Arafat is always careful to have the majority in number in the executive committee. We were unable to change this even in the 16th session of the PNC.

We were quite aware and sure that we would not be able to take a decision of removing Arafat and condemn his trend or change it through the executive committee. Therefore we decided to boycott the executive committee meetings to stop Arafat from speaking on its behalf and in the name of the legitimacy as 6 of its members were absent. This is what happenned in reality, because the main rules of the executive committee state that its meetings cannot be conducted without the presence of two thirds of its members.

This means that we have won the legitimacy in the negative sense. In other words, that we stopped Arafat from speaking on behalf of the executive committee, and that any step taken by Arafat after this is an individual one which doesn't represent anyone but Arafat and those who agree with his trend.

Perhaps some will say that this will lead to the paralysis of the PLO and its effectivity, and here I say in response that this is a very sad subject of great concern to us. But if we were to be given the choice between paralyzing the bodies or putting them in the hands of the US and Arab reaction, then we are forced to choose the temporary paralysis of the bodies in order to start working towards bringing them back to the nationalist position and their effectivity towards the nationalist direction.

How do you evaluate the participation of the Yemeni SocialistParty and both Lebanese and Syrian communist parties in the Aden negotiations?

The Palestinian question has its own peculiarities which make it number one question for the Arab nation. After this, I would like to extend my appreciation to the role played by the Yemeni Socialist Party on the Palestinian level. We remember during the invasion and after it, this similar role of the Yemeni Socialist Party which was aiming first towards the unity and protection of the PLO. After this it is important to point out the historical relations that have existed between the PFLP and the DFLP on one hand and the Yemeni Socialist Party on the other. These relations we are quite proud of and continuously work to deepen and solidify them. To this we add the role which was played by our comrades in the Yemeni Socialist Party regarding the foundation of the Joint Leadership (experience). Therefore, it is very natural in stage, like the one the Palestinian Revolution is going through, to seek help from our comrades in the Yemeni Socialist Party in order to hear their point of view on how to confront this stage and resolve its problems.

As for both communist parties, the Syrian and the Lebanese, they both have good comradely relations with us, the PFLP and DFLP on one hand and between themselves as well, which we are careful to maintain and strenghthen. We appreciate that the Lebanese Communist Party, as well as the Syrian Communist Party can play a role on the levels of the Lebanese National Movement, the Palestinian National Movement, as well as on the level of Arab and international liberation movements. A role that helps the Palestinian Revolution to come out of its crisis. Finally, I would like to state that these forces are very concerned about the success of the joint leadership experience - as we are concerned to seek their point of view regarding the existing Palestinian problems.

It is of great importance to me to take the opportunity to extend my deep and sincere thanks to these parties for their great and positive participation in the Aden meeting. Their efforts played an important role in reaching the positive results achieved in this meeting.

It was important to us, during the tactical differences that took place after Arafat's visit to seek help of forces that we can trust that any of their offered opinions rely on a rich and long experience and a strong concern over the Palestinian arena and the importance to unite it on a progressive national basis. ●

Joint Communique

PFLP-DFLP Joint Command, PLF and PCP

During the period from March 23 to March 26, 1984, an extended meeting was held in Aden, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Delegations representing the DFLP-PFLP Joint Command, the PLF and the PCP participated in the meeting. Thee meeting was also attended by a delegation from the Yemeni Socialist Party and representatives of both the Syrian Communist Party and the Lebanese Communist Party.

The meeting examined the current situation in the PLO, the dangers threatening it and the ways to solve the crisis that the Palestinian revolution is passing through, in such a manner as to preserve the role and unity of the Palestinian revolution and the PLO, and strengthen its position as the vanguard of the struggle of the Palestinian people and their sole legitimate representative, and as an advanced force within the Arab national liberation movement against imperialism, Zionism and their puppets.

In conclusion, the four Palestinian organizations arrived at complete agreement on presenting an initiative to conduct a full-scale national dialogue among all Palestinian patriotic organizations, forces and personalities, in order to solve the crisis on the following basis:

1) Safeguarding the unity of the PLO and its institutions on a patriotic, progressive, anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist basis in adherence to the political program adopted by the 14th session of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) in 1979, and the resolutions of the PNC's 16th session held in Algiers, February 1983.

2) Confronting the path of deviation and capitulation in all its forms, particularly the visit to Cairo and the moves following it, with emphasis on actual commitment to the resolutions of the PNC's Algiers session, including the rejection of the Camp David accords and the Reagan plan.

3) Firm adherence to the patriotic line of the PLO and its resolutions, particularly those concerning opposing the restoration of relations with the Egyptian regime, unless it gives up the Camp David accords, and preventing the ongoing attempts by the Jordanian regime to infringe on the right of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Consolidation of the relations of strategic alliance with the forces of the Arab national liberation movement, especially with Syria and the Lebanese nationalist forces, and with the forces of progress and peace in the world, headed by the Soviet Union. Commitment to the basis of the solution of the Palestinian cause as stipulated in the resolutions of the PNC's Algiers session.

4) Securing the unity of the PLO requires the establishment of a collective leadership, loyal to the resolutions of the PLO and its national line, in which all the Palestinian patriotic organizations and forces will be represented.

5) The meeting highly appreciates the Soviet-Syrian communique, issued on March 14, 1984, in Damascus, and particularly its emphasis on the necessity to secure the unity of the Palestinian Resistance movement, to urgently overcome the differences within the PLO, to consolidate the unity of the PLO on the basis of its progressive, anti-imperialist path, and to rectify and develop the relations between the PLO and Syria. The meeting considers this position as representing one of the main bases of the efforts for the unity of the PLO and the Palestinian revolution.

6) Calling for the broadest national front within the framework of the PLO to safeguard the unity of the PLO and preserve its institutions and patriotic line, to confront the danger of the path of deviation and capitulation, and to foil all attempts to split and fragment the PLO. This call is addressed to all the nationalist organizations, unions and personalities. It does not include the formation of an alternative to the PLO or the establishment of institutions parallel to those of the PLO.

The meeting approved a plan of action for political moves on the Palestinian, Arab and international levels in the service of these aims.

The four Palestinian organizations participating in this meeting emphasize their high appreciation of the leadership of the Yemeni Socialist Party, headed by Comrade Ali Nasser Mohammad, Secretary-General of the YSP Central Committee, for hosting this meeting and for their constructive and positive role which contributed to the success of the talks. The four organizations also express their appreciation of the contribution made by the representatives of the Syrian Communist Party and the Lebanese Communist Party, which helped the meeting to arrive at the results outlined above.

March 27, 1984

Political Statement

Issued by the PFLP's Central Committee (8th Regular Plenum)

On April 9-10, 1984, the Central Committee of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine held its 8th regular plenum in which it reviewed all important developments and political events on the different international, Arab and Palestinian levels.

In particular the Central Committee discussed the significant victories accomplished by the Lebanese National Forces in confronting the imperialist,Zionist, fascist project which aimed at making Lebanon a bridge-head, through which a new link of the imperialist plan was to be inserted, thereby aiming to spread the policy of Camp David in the Arab region.

The steadfastness and struggle of the heroic Lebanese people on the military and political levels, the stubborn and heroic fighting waged by the armed National Resistance Front in South Lebanon, the great victories achieved in the mountains, Beirut and its southern suburb, and the decisive and solid position taken by Syria and the national progressive forces on the Arab and the international levels supporting the Lebanese National Forces-made Lebanon a solid barrier opposed to the imperialist, Zionist and reactionary plans. This culminated in the victories of the Lebanese National Forces by the great historic achievement represented by the abrogation of the agreement of subordination and treason: the May 17 agreement.

The Central Committee of the P.F.L.P. deeply considered this great historic victory, discussed its significances, and the anticipated dimensions of abrogating this agreement and emphasized the following:

First: The abrogation of the agreement came less than one year after signing it, a great historic victory accomplished by the Lebanese people, their national forces supported by the progressive Arab and international forces. It represented an important point in the development of Lebanon and the Arab region. This great event reflects the victory of the Lebanese people's will to fight against the outcome of the vicious imperialist, Zionist, reactionary aggression which culminated in the June aggression of 1982.

Second: The victory afflicted a defeat of the course of Camp David in Lebanon, thereby to the US-Zionist-Phalangist reactionary alliance, and it reclaimed nationalist Lebanon to its natural position of confronting capitulationist plans, first and foremost the liquidationist Reagan plan.

Third: The abrogation of the May 17 agreement is a tremendous victory for the Palestinian revolution and Syria in their opposition to the course of Camp David. It is a victory for the Arab Liberation Movement and its friend and allies in the world, in the forefront our friend the Soviet Union.

Fourth: The abrogation of the agreement is a defeat to the course of the capitulating Palestinian right-wing who proceeded to accept the collapse of Lebanon under the imperialist, Zionist and reactionary hegemony. After the evacuation of the Palestinian resistance from Beirut, in particular, the Palestinian right-wing began to get closer to the proposed imperialist solutions in the Arab region.

Fifth: This victory reaffirms the historic inevitability of this epoch: the people's victory and the enemy's defeat is inevitable. It gives clear evidence that the plans of imperialism and their allies are not fatal. The American ambitions to act singlehandedly in the region, strike at the Arab Liberation Movement and liquidate the Palestinian Revolution, are not liable to be implemented except in a defeatist, capitulationist climate, agitated for by the circles of Arab reaction on the base of «There is power and no strength» in confronting America and the Zionist enemy. For our Palestinian people and Arab nation this victory puts forward the revolutionary alternative to the cause of capitulation and subordination and reaffirms the credibility of armed struggle and people's war.

Sixth: This victory reaffirmed the significance of the solid alliance between the Arab Liberation Movement and the world revolutionary forces, in the forefront our friend the Soviet Union and all countries of the socialist community, which firmly and decisively supported the Lebanese national forces, Syria and the Palestinian Revolution in opposing the imperialist, Zionist, and fascist plans for Lebanon.

The Central Committee of the P.F.L.P. reaffirmed that the battle in Lebanon is not yet over. Though the imperialist, Zionist, fascist forces faced a great defeat, they will not simply accept it. Through different methods, they will work to reimpose their plans. This demands more vigilance, awareness and preparations and calls for deepening the alliance between the Lebanese National Forces, Syria and the Palestinian Revolution to confront the coming aggressive plans. In particular, the imperialist and Zionist circles did not stop their threats to wage a broad aggression against Syria, due to its firm and decisive position opposing their plans in the Arab region and its support to the Lebanese National Forces. This position played an important role in the abrogation of the May 17 agreement.

The Central Committee of the P.F.L.P. reaffirmed the importance of joint action between the Palestinian Revolution

and the Lebanese National Forces to escalate armed struggle against the Zionist occupation in Southern Lebanon; to aid the struggle of the Lebanese National Forces to secure a united, independent Arab Lebanon and its democratic development; to organize relations between the Palestinian Revolution and the Lebanese National Movement to protect the security of our masses and camps in Lebanon and to preserve their civil and social rights to organizational and political work, fight the Zionist enemy, join the ranks of the revolution and guarantee the rights of the PLO and its institutions in Lebanon. The Central Committee reaffirmed that all this would have to be implemented through total coordination with the Lebanese National Forces which lead the struggle in the Lebanese arena.

On the Palestinian level,the Central Committee of the P.F.L.P. discussed the developments witnessed in the region. In particular, it considered the situation facing the PLO which is still suffering from internal, sharp and deep problems. This is due to the policy of deviation and division practiced by the capitulating leadership of the Palestinian right-wing represented by Yasser Arafat and his political supporters. This policy is an obvious departure from the national program and the resolutions of the consecutive sessions of the Palestinian National Council (the PNC). The development of events affirmed the correctness of the political views and positions of the PFLP, which emphasized that Arafat's visit to the regime of Camp David was not an ephemeral mistake or an individual action, but a studied and planned step firmly connected to the course of deviation, capitulation and dealing with the imperialist solutions which aim to liquidate the national rights of our people. Thus, this visit and the concerted moves that followed it with the Arab reactionaries, in particular the Jordanian regime, form a decisive turning point in the right-wing course, its clear transition from a position of being hesitantly willing to deal with the American solutions and settlements to a position of gasply searching for a role on the basis of these liquidationist solutions represented by the Camp David accords and Reagan plan.

The Arafat-Hussein-Mubarak alliance shows the dangerous role which this capitulating Palestinian right wing began to play in connection to the imperialist plans in the Arab region. The coordination, participation and alliance with King Hussein, who is preparing himself to usurp the right to represent the Palestinian people, carries the gravest dangers for the future of our people's struggle and the PLO.

The development of events revealed the dangerous role the Jordanian regime is preparing to play by totally coordinating and aligning with US imperialism. The critical statements of King Hussein towards the trustworthy American promises to America's Arabs cannot impair the strong bases of this alliance or hinder its reality.

The dangers of the Jordanian role were clearly demonstrated , when the Amman authorities proceded to revive the Jordanian Parliament, especially its Palestinian branch, after almost one decade of suspension.This move offers more proofs of the determination of the Jordanian regime to expropriate the sole representation of our people by the PLO. The dangers of this process can not be totally understood except by viewing it in the context of Camp David, the Reagan plan and the solidifying of the triple alliance between Arafat, Hussein and Mubarak.

The Jordanian role exposes extreme dangers in the light of the possibilities for the Al-Mirakh alignment to return to power in the Zionist entity. This question raises the possibilities of reaching a Middle Regional solution which depends on «a Jordanian bias» and adopts the liquidationist essence of both projects, the «United Kingdom» and the «Confederation» which gives the relations between the capitulationist right wing and the Jordanian regime a dangerous dimension surpassing any previous stage.

Arafat's visit to Jordan, his discussions with King Hussein, their joint agreement on major issues, and the joint declared alliance between them - which carries some significance in the light of the history of the Jordanian reactionary regime, its aggressive policies towards the Palestinian cause, all Arab liberation movements and progressive questions, and his ambitions to be the old-new heir of the PLO - offers the final evidence for the determination of the capitulationist Palestinian right wing to continue the course of deviation, not abiding to the resolutions reaffirmed by the Palestinian National Council. This reaffirms the correctness of the PFLP line calling for Arafat's resignation and removal from the chairmanship of the Executive Committee of the PLO, as he is no longer trusted in relation to the PLO resolutions and National Program.

The rightist deviationist policy had a set of negative reflections on conditions inside the occupied territories. The most important one was that it provided an opportunity for reactionary elements - proteges of Jordan and the Zionist entity to start a set of moves which aims to put pressure on Arafat to make him authorize Jordan to speak on behalf of the Palestinians and thus bypassing the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and their national cause, and to provide an opportunity for people like Shawa and Elias Freij and other reactionary elements to exploit the split taking place in the political position of the PLO in order to direct blows to the democratic and progressive Palestinian forces inside the occupied homeland under various pretexts.

The Central Committee considered the conditions in the occupied homeland and reviewed the destructive and dangerous reflections resulting from the rightist deviationist policy led by Yasser Arafat, which entails the greatest harm to our people's struggle there. The Central Committee expressed its deep pride in our people's struggle in the occupied territories, their courageous opposition to the Zionist enemy's plans, and their decisive confrontation to the rightist deviationist policy of the capitulationist Palestinian right wing. These steadfast masses continuously reaffirm their commitment and belief in the unity of the PLO on the basis of its national program hostile to ▶

imperialism, Zionism and reaction, and their persistance to oppose all attempts of deviation, capitulation and division.

Moreover, The Central Committee of the P.F.L.P. deeply considered the talks in Aden and the results of the quadruple meeting between the Joint Leadership, the Palestine Liberation Front and the Palestinian Communist Party. It reaffirmed its great gratification and high esteems of these talks and their outcomes, as what happenned in Aden represents an important step towards implementing the unity of the Palestinian arena and the ranks of the PLO and creating a broad Palestinian national front within the PLO to confront the course of deviation and capitulation.

While the Central Committee of the P.F.L.P. highly evaluates the results of the Aden talks, it reaffirms its great concern to the need of having a comprehensive Palestinian national dialogue with all Palestinian forces in order to create a broad Palestinian national front within the PLO to oppose the course of deviation and capitulation and to preserve and strengthen the unity of the PLO on the basis of its national program hostile to Imperialism, Zionism and Arab Reaction.

The great danger surrounding our people's cause and revolution require that all Palestinian forces, striving to continue the revolution and the Palestinian armed struggle, to unite their efforts and potentials in order to preserve the revolutionary march of our people and to eradicate the course of deviation and capitulation, and to preserve the unity of the PLO, so that the revolution will continue to realize the objective of our people and their national aspirations.

On the Arab level, The Central Committee of the P.F.L.P. discussed the recent development on all levels. In particular, it considered the positive development witnessed in the Arab arena. The mass movement in Sudan, Tunisia, and Morocco clearly shows that the dilemma of the capitulating and reactionary Arab regimes has started to enter an aggravating stage on different levels - political, social and economic. The Arab situation is beginning to witness the emerge of a mass rise which covers the whole Arab area, and gives the Arab liberation forces and their allies an opportunity to seize the initiative and wage a counter attack backed by the great victory achieved in Lebanon which transformed the Lebanese National Movement, the Palestinian Revolution and Syria from positions of defense to positions of offense.

On the international level, The Central Committee of the P.F.L.P. discussed the recent developments and considered in particular the aggressive policy of the USA. This policy is an outcome of the general crisis of the world capitalist system on various economic, political and social aspects, whereby Imperialism attempts to rid itself of this crisis by escalating its aggressive policy against the people, increase tensions in the world by returning to the policy of cold war and redeployment of Pershing 2 and Cruise missiles in Europe and thus threatening humanity with a danger of nuclear catastrophe.

In confronting this policy, all peoples and progressive forces in the world, countries of the socialist community, with the Soviet Union in the forefront rise to limit this policy and to establish peace and freedom, the aspirations of all peoples.

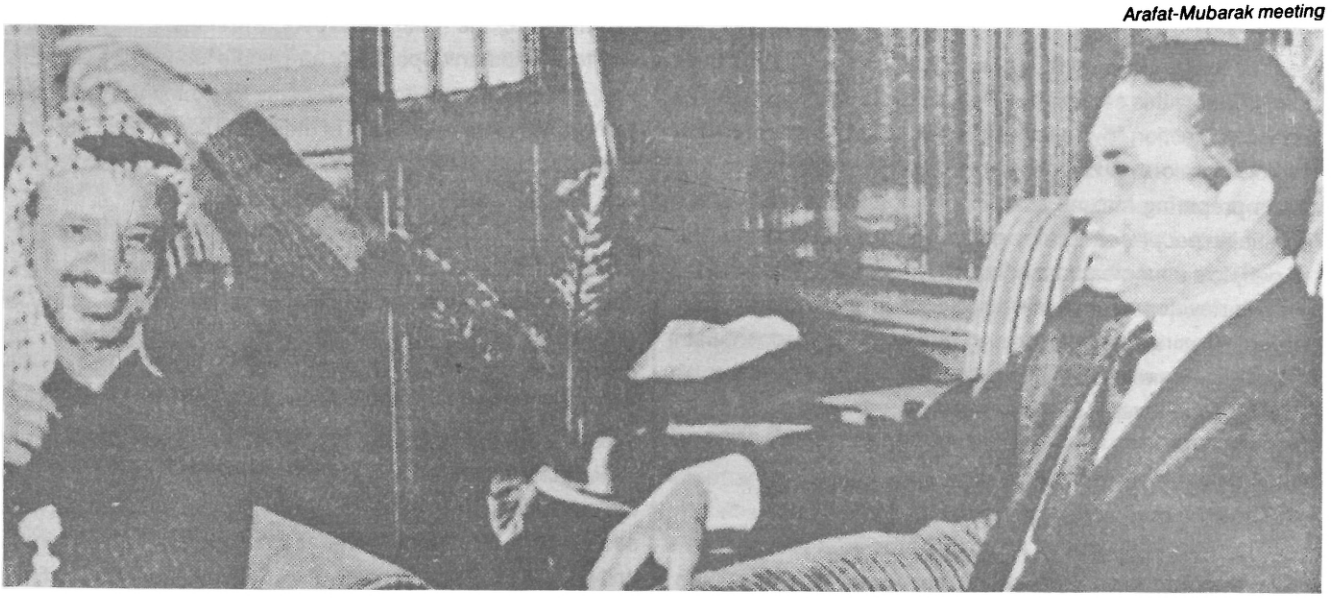
The national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America confront the aggressive policy of the US through escalating their armed struggle backed by all progressive and peace loving peoples of the world.

At the end of its plenum, The Central Committee of the P.F.L.P. saluted the masses of our people in the occupied homeland and the fighting masses in Southern Lebanon. Moreover, it saluted the steadfast heroes of our people in the prisons of Zionist occupation and of reactionary regimes.

LONG LIVE THE ARMED PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION
WE WILL BE VICTORIOUS

The Central Committee of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
April12, 1984 ●

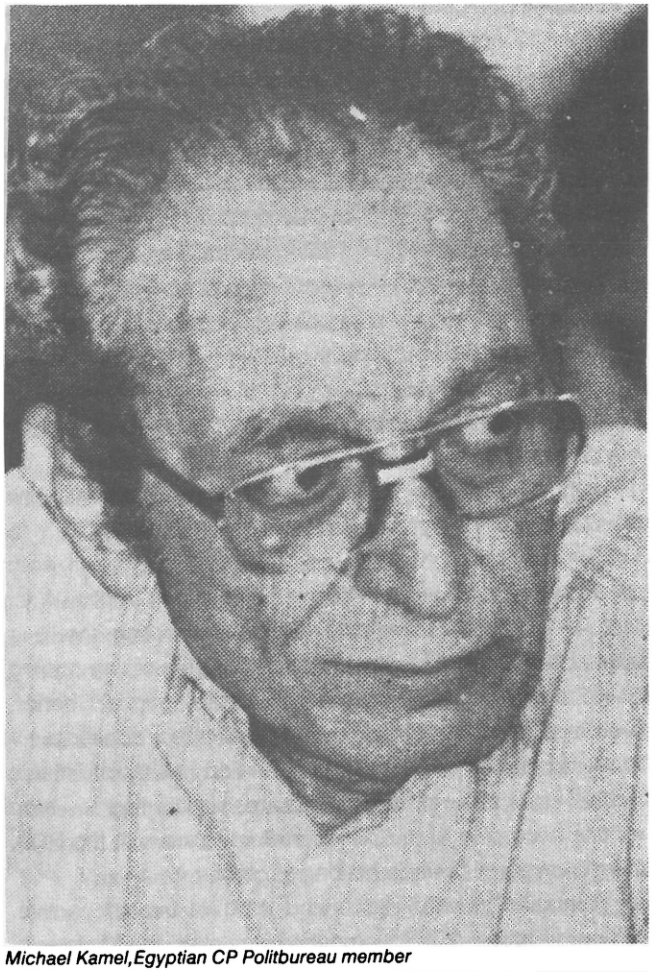
Arafat-Mubarak meeting



Arafat's Visit to Cairo

the Egyptian Communist View

The following is a translation of an article written by Michel Kamal, Politbureau member of the Communist Party of Egypt, which appeared in the February edition of Al Yassar Al Arabi (The Arab Left). The subject is Arafat's visit to Cairo and its political implications. We find it important that our leaders are acquainted with the viewpoint of Arab progressive forces on this subject, for indeed it is a matter with implications spreading beyond the Palestinian revolution, to affect the Arab national liberation movement. Michel Kamal's article essentially takes the form of a polemic directed to some components of the nationalist opposition in Egypt, who supported Arafat's visit. (The explanatory notes in brackets are our own.)



Michael Kamel,Egyptian CP Politbureau member

The reconciliation «gate» and the Camp David path

Now that the storm unleashed by Arafat's visit to Cairo and his talks with the President of Egypt has calmed down, the atmosphere is suitable for a comradely, reasonable discussion. Though there are broad differences in the evaluation of the visit, these differences exist within the framework of the alliance of the Arab nationalist forces. We are confident that the parties involved in an erroneous evaluation of this subject will reevaluate their positions on the basis of their nationalist sentiment...

In order to clarify our point of view, and save the objective political outlook from the vagueness that has been spread... we will focus on the substance of the matter. Without underestimating the dangerous, negative aims of the initiative to break the Egyptian regime's isolation, and putting aside discussion of boycott as a method in the political work, we do not consider that the essence of the problem lies in the fact that «a leader of an Arab nationalist movement met with the president of a subordinate regime». Rather the essence lies in the ultimate ideological and political basis behind this step, the confusion that surrounded it, the context in which the meeting occured, the anticipated complications and the dangers it entails, for it reveals an approach and an alternative that violates the political line and decisions of the Palestinian revolution. Furthermore, it contradicts the interests of the Egyptian national liberation movement and the Arab liberation struggle.

We begin by presenting the moves that preceded, accompanied and followed this event, for these clearly expose the plans and desires of the members of the Camp David alliance and Arab reaction to capitalize on this «error». Their moves and statements to a great extent speak for themselves, removing the need for superfluous analysis and explanation.

Egyptian preparations

Two days prior to the Arafat-Mubarak meeting, Egypt's Foreign Minister made a surprise visit to Washington, where he met with Schultz and Reagan. The President of Egypt has not tried to hide that an American «blessing» had been obtained: «We told them that Arafat will stop in Cairo on his way, and they welcomed the idea.»(*Al Watan,* December 24.) One day prior to the «surprise» (Arafat's visit), *Al Ahram* ▶

reported Kamal Hassan Ali as saying, «The Reagan Administration has responded to certain Egyptian ideas to revive the negotiations concerning the Palestinian issue». (*Al Ahram,* December 22.) He expressed his conviction that «The Palestinian leadership now concentrates on political methods...and if they merely get the hope for a peaceful solution, I believe there will be no need for more terrorism.» He emphasized that «Egypt is permanently in contact with Arafat and King Hussein to encourage them to join the peace process in the area on the basis of the Reagan initiative.» After his meeting with the US envoy Rumsfield, Mubarak declared, «We encourage the Palestinians to cooperate with King Hussein and establish links to push the Reagan plan to determine peace in the Middle East.»

A quick reaction came from the official American side in support of this step, as «an encouraging development in light of Egypt's commitment to the Camp David agreement and its strong support to the Reagan initiative.» In his first press conference after the Arafat-Mubarak meeting, the US President expressed his belief that «what President Mubarak is doing is to talk Mr. Arafat into going back to where he was...to hold contacts with King Hussein and make the peace negotiations, that is, any peace proposal to move to a new point.» He added, «Yet it is not necessary that an overall settlement in the Middle East precedes the settlement in Lebanon.» (as reported in December 23rd newpapers.)

In summary, nothing is new; the US and Egypt are in agreement and committed to the policy of Camp David and the Reagan plan.

Israel - full partner

In the meantime, Schultz had sent a message to the Israeli Prime Minister, trying to appease him by saying, «The meeting encourages Jordan to negotiate in order to reach a peaceful settlement with Israel, similar to what Egypt did before.» Despite the official Israeli protests, which expressed fear that the US role might not coincide with their objectives, «Israel was satisfied to attack Egypt», as was stated by Deputy Prime Minister David Levy. 3*Herald Tribune,* December 30.) Eliaho Ben Eliazer, chairman of the Israeli Foreign Affairs and Security Committee and former ambassador to Egypt, declared: «The main fact remains that Arafat went to Mubarak without Mubarak's renouncing the Camp David agreements, and with the flag of Israel raised over the Israeli embassy in Cairo.» (*Al Ittihad,* December 23.) Yitzhak Rabin also stated his opinion: «Perhaps the meeting will prove to be positive if it enables Egypt to convince King Hussein to represent the Palestinians in the peace negotiations.» (*Herald Tribune,* December 25.) Shamir called for renewal of the autonomy talks.

Speaking to *Yediot Aharanot*, Butros Ghali, the Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, tried to appease his Israeli allies by saying that he wanted to «clarify to public opinion in Israel that Egypt does not intend to work behind Israel's back or deceive it. Egypt is working to save the peace talks from the stalemate they are suffering.» (*Al Watan,* December 31.)

With this commitment to the «honor of Camp David», the Egyptian authorities rapidly sent their envoy, Shafi Abdel Hamid, deputy of Foreign Affairs, to Israel to meet David Kimche, the General Director of the Foreign Ministry, and Prime Minister Shamir. After the latter was satisfactorily appeased, the two discussed «issues of mutual interest to achieve common objectives». Shamir told the Egyptian envoy that he «would like to reactivate the autonomy talks for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza after the period of stagnation.» (*Herald Tribune,* December 30.) According to Zionist logic, this is limited to civil administration for the population without any power over the land.

It is legitimate to ask about the aims of some of Israel's actions in the recent period. For instance, at the time of the prisoner exchange when the battle in Tripoli reached its climax, assurances were given, to Mubarak in particular, of «safe passage» for Arafat and the Palestinian fighters, without blocking their departure from Lebanon. In any case, the shrewdness of the enemy should not be underestimated; Israel takes advantage of every available opportunity to weaken its opponents and push things in a certain direction - in this case, cornering Egypt and Jordan, taking into account all possibilities and options. Since the wise men of international finance capital are the ones who created «the game of nations», it is easy to deduce its principles and conclude the modes of reaction among the national bourgeoisie.

And Jordanian initiatives

In mid-December, King Hussein declared in an interview with BBC that he may find himself forced in the near future to bypass the Arab consensus and be satisfied with an Arab majority, as the means for joining negotiations on the West Bank and Gaza. After the Arafat-Mubarak meeting, the King called to «have as the first point on the agenda of any coming Arab Summit, reconsideration of the Arab League Charter, whereby decisions will be by majority and not by consensus.» (*Al Watan,* January 1.) In response, Khaled Hassan of Fatah's Central Committee stated that desire is mounting to «stop working according to the principle of consensus in the PLO, and rely on the majority in making decisions.»

Contacts between Cairo and Amman became active. Before the Arafat-Mubarak meeting was over, the Minister of Economy carried a message from Mubarak to the Jordanian monarch concerning the settlement. Later, the President of Egypt sent the director of his office for political affairs, Osama al Baz, «to inform him about the current talks that occurred with Arafat».

On January 5th, King Hussein abolished the National Consultative Council and called the Jordanian parliament for an emergency session. This parliament had not met since the occupation of the West Bank in 1967, and was indefinitely sus-

pended in 1974, when the Rabat Summit declared the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This step is a violation of the Rabat Summit resolutions and aims to put pressure on the PLO to determine its position in negotiations on the basis of the Reagan plan, which has been adopted by the Hashemite Kingdom.

The Arafat-Mubarak meeting was the opening for a series of successive steps, closely linked to the nature and outlook of the party to which this new crossing had occurred, i.e. Mubarak. The most outstanding of these steps are:

Government-in-exile....and campaign against the radicals

Yasir Arafat declared that he endorsed the establishment of a government-in-exile. The chief editor of *Al Ahram*, Ibrahim Nafe, praised this step as «the first positive political initiative by Arafat after the departure». It is well known that Sadat, from 1972, had insisted on establishing a «provisional Palestinian government». Mubarak proposed the idea again during the Israeli siege of Beirut, declaring his willingness that this government «reside in Cairo». On December 29, 1983, he declared to Kuwaiti papers that «Cairo cannot host this government, because Egypt must have its freedom of movement».

This formula of government-in-exile was always proposed by Arab reaction; it has received response from conservative trends in the PLO, who were inclined to reconciliation and compromises; cornered by the constraints of internal «democracy», they sought alternative frameworks to the PLO.

It is rather difficult to separate this idea from «the nature of the next stage of the Palestinian struggle (which) will be determined by political, diplomatic and popular work on the Arab and international levels», as stated by Arafat to the Saudi newspaper, *Al Youm*, on December 23rd. A *Washington Post* correspondent wrote that Arafat said to him that «his attitude this time towards King Hussein will not be as it was last April, when he withdrew from the negotiations table on the Reagan peace plan. Moreover, he will not bow to the pressure of the radical factions in the organization.»!! (*Al Ahali*, January 4.) It is known that the pressures at that time came from inside the Central Committee of Fatah.

Yasir Arafat's emphasis that he will not accept any truce or reconciliation with the «dissidents», and Mubarak's statements that «Arafat promised me to finish the question of the dissidents and to put the Palestinian house in order from the inside, to hold contacts with King Hussein and explore the next stage as soon as possible», confirm the interference of the Egyptian authorities in the «independence of the Palestinian decision». Added to that were Butros Ghali's statements in the People's Assembly, where he didn't hide that «Egypt encourages the moderate faction in the PLO». This means an attempt to split the organization, since Cairo considers all the other factions as radicals and extremists.

The unjustified political campaign against the Soviet Union

It was claimed by Arafat that the Soviet Union had stopped providing arms, a claim which was denied by Abu Jihad and Arafat's supporters. Arafat unjustly claimed that «the Soviet Union took the side of their Syrian ally». Furthermore, his attack reached the extent of a veiled threat when he remarked to *Al Akhbar*, a warning that the Soviet Embassy in Beirut has no protection. He added that «the Soviet presence in the Middle East would disappear if he was defeated in the battle of Tripoli».!! It is very unfortunate that these attacks came from a leader of an organization that receives the greatest political, military and morale support from the Soviet ally. The dangerous implications of these statements lie in that they are indications of retreat, which has always begun by opening a fabricated battle against the Soviet Union.

Shifting alliances

Lifting the ugly face of the subordinate regime of Egypt by expressions of appreciation and praise... To this end, Arafat employed abstractions and generalities which mixed Egypt, the state, with Egypt, the people and their national movement; he mixed between «shanty Egypt» and «palace Egypt», in the words of the Egyptian poet, Ahmed Fuad Nejem.

This is to ignore the alliances of the regime and the strings that bind it, which Arafat accepts submissively. He speaks of «big brother Egypt who leads the area» and that the moment Egypt is absent from the leadership «defeats take place». He expresses his desire to depend on the «weight of Egypt». His spokesman Ahmed Abdel Rahman declares that «the latest battles have proven that there is no ally for the organization (PLO) other than Egypt, and there is no alternative to Egypt». Moreover, he views that «any changes in the Middle East would have to pass first through the Egyptian gate».!! (*Al Watan,* December 30.)

We talk in a different language, for we belong to a different Egypt than the one they mean. The «weight» of Egypt, the state, was and will remain close to the US solution, imperialist hegemony, and liquidating the Palestinian cause and legitimate rights. The Egyptian gate leads nowhere except to Camp David...until further notice when the people of Egypt, our Egypt, have put this regime in its final place of rest.

President Mubarak did not let «the occasion» pass without teaching his guest and all Arabs a hard lesson. Venting his anger, he proudly declared that Arafat's visit served to «confirm that Egypt was always right». He expressed his readiness to «meet with any Arab leader to convince him of Camp David». He advised the Arabs «to help President Reagan» and emphasized that «the point of agreement is to start moving on the basis of the Reagan initiative».

This talk of ours is also directed to some Egyptian oppos-

ition forces who participated in, or supported the dramatic visit.

The covergence of the two approaches and lines (those of the Palestinian right and Arab reaction) is not something new. It appeared tragically in the last PNC session where the conciliatory trend prevailed concerning several problems and proposed (imperialist) projects. This meant the policy of LAA'M (yes and no at the same time) and feeble slogans and formulas, such as the one that resulted as a compromise: «Closeness to the Egyptian regime a much as it distances itself from Camp David». This formula left the way open for contradictory interpretations and assessments, because in the final analysis it bows to the (leading) class structure and ideological basis, which allows for steering events according to desires. The danger of these fluctuations mounts in times of crisis and setbacks for the revolution, when polarization and social movement are active in the terrain of an atmosphere of defeatism. This was the bolster relied on by the supporters of the meeting with the Egyptian regime, considering this to be «implementing the resolutions of the PNC».

International media almost unanimously agreed that the primary beneficiary of the visit was the Egyptian regime. Here we have the right to ask: Did this spectacular occasion on the part of Fatah's leadership lead to pulling the Egyptian regime away from Israel? In reality, what happened was just the opposite: Egyptian-Israeli contacts and coordination were advanced to a higher level; the second part of Camp David and the Reagan plan were revived; channels were opened for broader and firmer cooperation under the pretext of the necessity of regaining the rights of the Palestinian people.

From the illusion of «closeness» to the art of national commitment

We reiterate that the issue is not merely one of «a meeting of a national movement leader with the president of a subordinate regime». It is much greater than that. It consists of a complete approach that requires taking practical steps towards a clearly defined path. Therefore, it cannot be covered by the curtain of «forgiving and forgetting». Nor can it be erased from the memory by the mere repetition of some statements emphasizing the «firmness» of positions against Camp David and the Reagan plan. Rather, a frank, critical assessment is required, one that is not confined to formalities, but deals with the substance of the matter.

We criticized the formula of «closeness as much as distancing» and noted its destructive results. This formula feeds the illusions of some factions of the nationalist opposition, while providing others with justifications for going back on many positions. It leads the most conscious masses to lose confidence in the leadership and struggle against the imperialist agreements and plans, especially abrogating Camp David.

The following is one example of the disasterous effects of the imagination of some elements of the opposition, who unwittingly slipped into the kingdom of illusions, thus adopting and propagandizing the claims of the authority. Ibrahim Nafe wrote praising «the participation of Egypt in protecting the forces of Arafat during their trip to North Yemen». One of the opposition papers picked this up and inflated it beyond all limits, writing that President Mubarak «ordered the Egyptian Armed Forces, Air Force and Navy to protect the Greek ships carrying Arafat and the Palestinian fighters, since they came close to Egyptian territorial waters...». This was not confined to distortion of the news. The tragedy lies in the fact that the writer concluded, «This is the first time since the October War of 1973, that the Armed Forces of Egypt are assigned a task which places them in possible confrontation with the major enemy of Egypt and the Arabs, i.e., the Israeli Defense Forces who threatened Arafat and his fighters.»! Moreover, he continues the talk about «the beginning of Arab unity with a correct national strategy».!! Similar expressions appeared in a commentary in another issue of the same paper, while the other articles on the same subject differed. This «dischord» appears to reflect the view of certain individuals or a group.

Based on mutual criticism between allies, we cannot remain silent towards such reckless explanations. We must be vigilant about the confusion that is created in public opinion by such illusions. President Mubarak himself does not claim these «heroic actions». He emphasizes that he «obtained Israeli guarantees for safe passage for Mr. Arafat and his men». This means that he obtained a «permit» and gave the green light after consultations with Tel Aviv. What a difference there is between reality and this tragic, adventurous imagination!

In Egypt and on the Arab level, various «theories» have been advanced with the purpose of making the regime or some of its components look better. These «theories» are spread under the influence of partial reforms and changes that do not touch the essence of things, with the hope that the regime will respond favorably to the flexibility of the factions (advancing the «theories») by «getting close» to them. Some of these «theories» are:

-The «theory» of inheritance that considers the regime's present subordination as a «wrapped package» that unexpectedly fell on the shoulders of the new rulers. An honest, objective examination of the role of the regime's components during the Sadat era squarely refutes this «theory». President Mubarak himself does not deny that he was a «full partner», convinced of the essence of the policy. The changes in the methods of rule and the forms of exercising state authority is a different question that has its own reasons, which are beyond the scope of this article.

-The «theory» of changes, which are viewed as the transition to a position qualitatively different from the existing subordination. This too is denied by President Mubarak in all his statements. We witness not only a continuation of essentially the same situation, but also additions to the policy of Sadat, not pulling away from it. The set of developments that followed the killing of Sadat emphasizes this. All that was essential to

Sadatism has been adhered to: support of the Reagan plan, the Israeli-Lebanese agreement, US military bases and joint maneuvers with the Rapid Deployment Force and NATO; special relations with the US, supporting its aggressive policy, or remaining silent as in the case of Lebanon and Grenada; increasing dependence on US aid, and hostility towards the Soviet Union and the socialist camp; forming a new reactionary axis with Jordan and Iraq, after their role in implementing the US plans emerged in this period; broad alliance with Arab reaction with increased opportunities for developing this alliance and making it official through the «Palestinian envoy», who took the initiative to break the blockade and official boycott; transforming Sudan into an «Egyptian protectorate» and making official the sending of mercenaries from the Egyptian Armed Forces to support reactionary regimes.

-There is a theory which talks about the «independent Palestinian decision». This is a legitimate right which all progressive nationalists support. Yet this does not lessen the responsibility of those parties that work to impair this independence. Here a question arises: By what logic can we conceive of the separation from the anti-imperialist front in the Arab East, which is headed by the tripartite alliance of the Palestinian-Lebanese national liberation movements with Syria? By what logic can we conceive of the transition to meeting with Camp David Egypt and , via Jordan, having a diplomatic dialogue with America? By what logic will such a relationship protect the independence of the Palestinian decision?

-There is the argument of «saving what can be saved as opposed to the Israeli bulldozers' daily ravaging of the Palestinian territories in the West Bank and Gaza», and the call for a rapid solution before Israel implements its decision to Judaize the West Bank and Gaza after the US elections. Without underestimating the danger of the land being swallowed, we must be alert to the deliberate exaggeration of these dangers. In spite of the immense efforts to consolidate the settlements, the number of settlers has not exceeded 30,000. All signs indicate that the Israelis aim to increase this number to 100,000 by the end of 1985, but this is difficult to implement. This difficulty increases with the mounting internal economic and political crisis and the long-term budget deficit that leads to cuts in the settlement budget. Moreover, it leads to emigration from Israel. In the beginning of this January, the Deputy Minister of Immigration anticipated an increase of emigration this year to 50,000 Israelis - triple the 1984 figure.

Undoubtedly, there are changes in the Arab and international arena that require modifications in tactics, methods and forms of activities, but not in the basic strategy of the Arab liberation movement or its components, or a renunciation of its modest objectives. A hard defeat was inflicted on the Palestinian resistance in Lebanon on the military level; then there was the tragic antagonism that reached the point of combat among the factions of the Palestinian national movement, and the crisis of its leadership. Yet, on the other hand, we find that the counterrevolutionary camp also suffers from difficulties, contradictions and defeats that are certainly not less and perhaps more than those in the camp of the revolution.

Soon after the victories of the Israeli war machine, points of weakness were revealed. The objectives it achieved were at a high price, while Israeli inability to resist guerilla warfare that has a popular depth was confirmed. Added to their failure to conquer Beirut, the Israelis are now exposed to daily attrition which inflicts greater losses than ever before. This has reflected on the internal economic and moral structure, and created a strong opposition to the expansionist policy. Israel is no longer feared as the «strong arm» after it sank in the quagmire. It is still licking wounds that bleed profusely due to the heroic actions of the popular resistance that became real guerilla warfare. Thus, Tel Aviv's main concern has become how to escape from the Lebanese trap.

The NATO armada, led by the US fleet, was powerless to stop hundreds of Marines and Multinational Forces from being swallowed. They are having a profoundly new experience confronting small people, light weapons and the humble militias of parties and sects - «human bombs». The New Jersey's canons, the most modern aircraft and the most destructive rockets and bombs, the genocidal war waged against unarmed people, are all to no avail. All this elicited a response inside the western societies, creating the beginning of a «Lebanon complex» even before the effects of the «Vietnam complex» are dispelled.

Volunteering a solution to the enemy crisis

It is erroneous to underestimate the Egyptian bourgeoisie, especially after it has overcome its period of worry, wherein it liquidated the system of national state capitalism. Moreover, it succeeded in deepening the capitalist relations in the present subordinate system. It succeeded in confronting the growing opposition, popular anger, and the pressure exerted by factions that were hurt by capitalism... While searching for methods to secure capitalist relations in the face of these requirements and pressures, the role of the most intelligent sectors and elements of the establishment emerged; they made modifications in the form and methods of their practices, without any essential changes.

The above-mentioned considerations, i.e. the dilemma of US policy and the Israeli crisis, added to the limitations of the «Saudi bag» (the idea that Riyad could lead Arab reaction), helped the Egyptian bourgeoisie to realize its «golden opportunity» to become the political agent of imperialism in the area, playing the leading role in coordinating and directing the moves of Arab reaction, close to the reliable Israeli agent as the military strike force, all on the basis of strategic consensus.

In this particular condition, any reconsideration of the subordinate Egyptian regime becomes a policy with grave dangers, through which imperialism, Israel and Arab reaction can find a way out of their dilemma and lighten the weight of their crises. ●

With its kingdom created by the British colonialists as a buffer for the Zionist state, the Hashemite monarchy has stayed in power by suppressing the people who fell under its jurisdiction, whether Palestinian or Jordanian. Hard repression has always been applied against any nationalist tendency and especially leftists. In the fifties, the regime gained notoriety for its fascist practices, imprisoning and torturing those who spoke out or tried to struggle against the Zionist occupation of Palestine. This later culminated in the 1970-71 massacres to drive out the Palestinian resistance and terrorize the people into passivity.

Then for a time, more subtle means of repression reigned. Imprisonment was still used of course, but the regime also began to deal with political activists by denying them permission to work and travel, withholding their passports and calling them for interrogation intermittently.

With the Zionist invasion of Lebanon, King Hussein eyed a new chance for entering the imperialist settlement. Anxious to find a Palestinian cover for this, and hoping to capitalize on the PLO's evacuation from Beirut, he offered an amnesty for those who wished to return to their families living in Jordan. In reality, this marked a resurgence in open, brutal repression. The King's amnesty proved to be a lie, as cadres of the Palestinian resistance were rounded up on their return. This included those who had left from Jordan with official permission to fight in the 1982 war, at a time when the king found it opportune to display his «patriotism». Also arrested were those who entered Jordan after being released from Ansar, while Palestinians returning from imprisonment in Zionist jails continued to be rearrested. New restrictions were imposed on Palestinians living in Jordan, that young men must sign up for the army, as well as on students coming from the occupied territories.

Meanwhile the regime did not drop its more subtle repressive means. These are now applied against the families of the growing number of political detainees: refusal of work and residence permits, withholding passports, threats of deportation,etc.

While the regime has billed its repressive campaign as a precautionary measure, to guarantee against unrest, it actually created a new field for popular and nationalist struggle. Mahatta, the central prison in Amman, became a crowded meeting place, bringing together long-term political detainees, cadres from the Palestinian resistance armed with the experience of Lebanon, as well as youth from the 1967 occupied territories. Their hunger strike in March marked a new escalation of the long-term struggle for democracy in Jordan.

Hunger Strike in Al-Mahatta Prison

Political prisoners escalate their struggle and achieve one round

On March 10th, political prisoners in Mahatta Central Prison in Amman, declared a hunger strike to last until their demands were fulfilled. They called for the release of all political detainees. This included the release of prisoners from the occupied territories, so that they could return there before their Israeli-issued permits expired, which would mean de facto expulsion. They also demanded a review of the cases of the prisoners who had been arbitrarily sentenced in unjust military trials. These demands were spelled out in a statement by the political prisoners in Mahatta, and copies were distributed to many institutions including the Jordanian government, parliament, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice and the General Directory of Security and Intelligence. Copies were also sent to the Jordanian Trade Union, the PLO office in Amman and Amnesty International. The strike lasted for 13 consecutive days. During this time, the number of participants rose to 114 prisoners.

Reactions

The hunger strike created an internal outcry and drew the attention of broad sectors among different circles in the country. This is because it was the biggest strike in the Jordanian prisons since 1950's, serving to expose the falsity of the «democracy» claimed by the authorities. The authorities were dismayed by this bold act on the part of the political prisoners and by the public attention it drew.Day by day, mass support mounted in solidarity with the prisoners' demands. Support came from mass organizations and trade unions. Solidarity actions occurred,such as the women's sit-in at the Red Cross headquarters in Amman, and the women's demonstration to the PLO office in Amman, which was suppressed by the Jordanian security forces. Some of the women were detained and interrogated.

The heads of trade unions in Jordan sent a telegram to the Prime Minister, demanding acceptance of the political prisoners' demands. They also sought to meet with him for the same purpose. The General Secretariat of the Popular Forces in Jordan held a meeting and adopted the prisoners' demands. Furthermore, it made contact with some members of parliament in order to have the issue raised there. The Committees for the Defense of Democratic Freedom in Jordan appealed to all Arab and international organizations concerned with freedom and human rights. (See box for text.)

The Committee's appeal was accompanied by a circular by the relatives of the political prisoners, who held the Jordanian government responsible for whatever might happen to the prisoners as a result of the hunger strike, especially as 15 of them were suffering from long-term, dangerous illnesses.

Preliminary results

As a result of the political prisoners' struggle, their 13-day hunger strike, and the broad solidarity campaign, the Jordanian government was forced to relent. On March 23rd, promises and guarantees were made by the officials concerned and submitted to the prisoners through members of the parliament, who had intervened on their behalf. In accordance with these promises, the Palestinian prisoners issued a statement, declaring the end of the strike (printed below). This is a great achievement, yet continued vigilance and struggle is required to insure fulfillment of the pledges given. ●

Document...Circular

We would like to inform you that our sons present in Mahatta Prison in Amman began a declared hunger hunger strike on Saturday, March 10, 1984. In so doing, we hold you totally responsible for whatever may result from this strike. Furthermore, we demand rapid action to release all the political prisoners. Our sons are:

1.	Ibrahim Moh'd Suleiman Salah	life sentence
2.	Hussein Ahmad Ra'ad	15 years
3.	Mahmoud al Nowahi	10 years
4.	Rasem Ramadan Hindi	10 years
5.	Ahmad Yaser Farmash	10 years
6.	Mohammad Abdel Kadr Khatib	10 years
7.	Faraj Moh'd Abdel Rahman Abu Shamana	10 years
8.	Ghazi Rashwan Hdib	10 years
9.	Yasin Marwan Yasin	10 years
10.	Samir Adnan al Masri	10 years
11.	Moh'd Jomeh Brhomah	10 years
12.	Hamdan Rashood al Hawari	10 years
13.	Musa Hussein al Barbi	7.5 years
14.	Salah Asa'd Diab	life sentence
15.	Musa Fedillat	life sentence
16.	Hashem Ahmad Hijazi	10 years
17.	Nizar Ahmad Farez al Kaied	10 years
18.	Salman Saleh Naqrash	10 years
19.	Mohammad Omar Ahmad al Malameh	10 years
20.	Nazeh Darwazeh	10 years
21.	Ahmad Moh'd Ahmad Ali	10 years
22.	Yusef Sa'ed Hamed	10 years
23.	Helal Ayyash	7.5 years
24.	Fuad Fawzi Musa Hassan	detained
25.	Imad Mahmoud Abdel Qader al Khawaja	detained
26.	Hussein Moh'd Abed al Issawi	detained
27.	Issa Moh'd Hassan Mensieh	detained
28.	Hussein Moh'd Hussein Ali	detained
29.	Rabhi Mahmoud Jaber al Fataftah	detained
30.	Moh'd Qasem Moh'd al Deek	detained
31.	Moh'd Khaled Ali al Hiwi	detained
32.	Jamal Tawfiq Mari al Sowati	3 years
33.	Ziad Yunis Talal Qasour	detained
34.	Rizak Sobhi Abdel Salam	3 years
35.	Raghib Musa al Gharbawi	detained
36.	Moh'd Jomah Abu Amra	detained
37.	Abdel Latif Jamil al Issawi	detained
38.	Abdel Fawzi Shaban	detained
39.	Othman Darwish Othman	3 years
40.	Abdel al Aziz Moh'd Al Tantour	detained
41.	Khalil Ibrahim Ashoor	detained
42.	Mustafa Issa al Hawari	detained
43.	Mazen Nawaf Issa	detained
44.	Abdel al Raheem Suleiman Abu Damrh	detained
45.	Yusef Moh'd Abdel al Hadi	detained
46.	Rafiq Moh'd Saleh al Hourani	detained
47.	Hussein Moh'd Hassan Washah	detained
48.	Saed Beshtawi	10 years
49.	Moh'd Kamal Hassan Abdel Qader	detained
50.	Baker Moh'd Yusef al Hijan	detained
51.	Sobhi Moh'd Hassan Tilawi	detained
52.	Khaled Moh'd Saleem Bawati	detained
53.	Khaled Ibrahim Moh'd Shahab	detained
54.	Hassan Mah'd Ahmad Abu Raad	3years
55.	Jamal Ahmad al Amaerh	5 years
56.	Abdel Hakim Zaher Bilal	detained
57.	Bassam Hassan al Najar	detained
58.	Tawfiq Moh'd Khalil Mustafa	detained
59.	Akram Mah'd Abdullah Jaber	detained
60.	Naser Suleiman Ragheb al Shatarat	detained
61.	Kamal Faris Awad	detained
62.	Ibrahim Abdullah Sultan	3 years
63.	Ziad Nimer Hussein	detained
64.	Moh'd Mah'd al Fidellat	detained
65.	Musa Saleh al Nabhani	detained
66.	Moh'd Karim al Nahar	detained
67.	Ali Hamad Abu Shanhadaneh	detained
68.	Adeeb Qasem Afnan	detained
69.	Moh'd Lui al Dabbagh	detained
70.	Durgham Jaris al Halasa	detained
71.	Ibrahim Moh'd Abu Amreeh	detained
72.	Mah'd Ismael Abdel Rahaman	life sentence
73.	Mah'd Moh'd Ismael Abdel al Aziz	life sentence
74.	Adel Musa Ibrahim al Manasreh	life sentence
75.	Khaled Moh'd Salaman Hdiab	life sentence
76.	Bader al Din Bader	detained
77.	Ahmad Mustafa al Natour	detained
78.	Talab Abdullah Moh'd Muslem	detained

STATEMENT OF ALL THE POLITICAL PRISONERS IN MAHATTA CENTRAL PRISON

To the national forces, organizations, personalities and trade unions in Jordan:

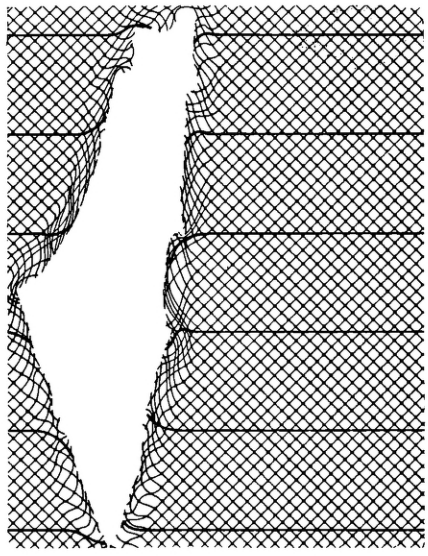
For thirteen days we have been waging a hunger strike in opposition to the authorities, which they proved unable to foil...

Some prominent members of parliament, authorized by the council of representatives, namely Yousef Al Athem, Laith Shbeilat, Daoud Suleiman, intervened directly by taking initiative to meet with us and the officials concerned, in order to find a solution to the problem; a permanent committee was formed to pursue the question of the political prisoners.

The following promises and guarantees from the officials concerned were submitted to us through these representatives:

1. Readiness to release the political detainees within a period that does not exceed the first half of April 1984.
2. Consent to free the political prisoners from the occupied territories and enable them to return there.
3. Serious study of the cases of the sentenced political prisoners and reconsideration of their sentences.

The question of the political prisoners has now been totally and effectively presented on the political, informational and mass levels for the first time in Jordan, on all levels and within the different circles.



In view of the above, we have decided to end our hunger strike on Thursday afternoon, March 22, 1984.

While declaring this decision, we would like to emphasize our total adherence to all political demands presented in the document whereby we declared the strike on March 10, 1984; we emphasize our continuous readiness and firm commitment to struggle, so that these demands will be fulfilled, regardless of the sacrifices involved.

We have a high evaluation of the active role of all national forces, organizations, personalities and trade unions, in and outside Jordan, that supported our just cause, and of the mothers and relatives of the political prisoners who stood by us. At the same time, we urge these forces, organizations and personalities to continue the struggle so that this regime and its repressive methods against our people and militants will be exposed.

Signature / Political prisoners in Mahatta Central Prison,

Amman - Friday, March 23, 1984 ●

Defense Committee Appeal

DearSirs

The Committees for the Defense of Democratic freedom in Jordan extend warm greetings. We would like to inform you of the latest developments in the hunger strike that has been waged by the political detainees in Mahatta Central Prison in Amman, since March 10, 1984.

First: On January 30, 1984, thirty-five detainees started a hunger strike to protest their unlawful detention. They demanded to be brought to trial, or immediately released. On February 5th, the strike was called off after the detainees received official promises that their demands would be fulfilled.

Second: After the failure of the Jordanian authorities to fulfill their promises, twenty-eight detainees declared a new hunger strike for the same demands on March 10th.

Third: On March 15th, in solidarity with the strikers, thirty-five political detainees declared a hunger strike until the demands of their fellow detainees were fulfilled. They presented a memorandum to this effect to all the official departments concerned.

Fourth: After deterioration in the health condition of seventeen detainees due to the strike and to lack of medical care, the families of the political detainees presented letters to the prison administration and the related security authorities, demanding their intervention to save the lives of the detainees. The families' demands met with no response.

Fifth: Under the pressure of Jordanian public opinion and due to the dangerous situation in the prison, a delegation from the ministry visited the prison. According to one member of the delegation, they were shocked by the critical situation of the detainees. Yet the visit had no results because decisions in such matters are not in the hands of the ministers, or even of the cabinet, but in the hands of the powerful intelligence apparatus in the country.

Dear sirs,

Due to the critical health condition of the political detainees, and to the Jordanian authorities' negligence and news black-out regarding their situation, we ask you to protest and intervene on their behalf. We urge you to demand the release of the political detainees in the country and an end to the repeated violation of the human rights of the Jordanians.

Demonstrations in Yarmouk University

In late February, the University of Yarmouk, in Irbid, Jordan, witnessed a mass student movement, the broadest and most active since the University was established. Students moved to oppose certain measures implemented by the University Administration, and demanded reforms in the University curriculum. Also there were demands for democratic rights for students and trade unions in Jordan.

470 students suspended

This protest movement arose when the University Administration launched an attack against the students. According to University sources, 470 students were suspended. They are enrolled in different colleges and years. A great part of them are in their 4th academic year - 72 engineering students, 174 students enrolled in the College of Sciences, 122 enrolled in the College of Administrative Sciences, 74 enrolled in the College of Literature, 10 enrolled in the Schools og Medicine, Pharmacy, and Medical Technology.

The suspensions included some prominent student leaders who have strongly opposed the security agents' interference in the affairs of the students.

The University Administration enacted the suspensions on the grounds that the students' Accumulative Grade Point Averages were below the University's minimum, which is known to be 70%. In comparison, the minimum at the Jordan University in Amman (the only other university in Jordan), is 60%. This argument of the University Administration was rejected by the majority of students and some faculty members. Some faculty members protested the suspensions to the President, Mr. Adnan Badran, and described them as unconvincing, inhuman and dubious. A statement issued by the students and sent to the Popular Forces in Jordan, called attention to the fact that the administration's decision has grave implications on the future of many students: «If this direction prevails in the University Administration, great numbers of students will be exposed to final suspension at the end of every semester».

In fact, this year's action is not the first in the history of the university. For instance, 520 students were suspended at the end of the first semester of the Academic Year of 1982-83. This was followed by suspending 180 students at the end of the 2nd semester of the same year.

Defect lies in the curriculum

This humiliating situation facing many students in Jordan has deep-rooted causes. The above mentioned students' statement asks: Where is the defect and why do so many students get suspended? Apparently, this deteriorating situation is a reflection of the hard curriculum followed at the university, which is the major reason for the suspensions of the 470 students, if not more. It is well known that it is the best students of the secondary schools who gain admittance to the two universities in Jordan.

We notice this phenomena of suspending students in the University of Yarmouk, but not in the Jordanian University. Therefore, the main defect must lie in the curriculum and the regulations imposed on students.

Students go on strike

As a result of the enduring problem, the students at Yarmouk University moved to protest these measures of the University Administration, the university regulations and the curriculum. On February 6th, the events began when a big number of students met in the main yard of the university. They raised banners emphasizing the nature of their protest as an academic demonstration. Other banners were raised condemning the suspension of the 470 students due to the nature of the curriculum. Later they organized a committee, representing the suspended students and the others, to meet the President of the university. However, Badran refused to meet with them. Instead, the Director of Student Affairs came out, threatening the participants of the demonstration. The students continued their protest and threatened to go on strike until the following demands were met: 1, The return of all suspended students without any conditions; 2. Modification of the curriculum to provide a good level of education that includes practical courses related to the needs of the Jordanian society; 3. Modifications in the system of the university, so that it will coincide with that of the Jordanian University, concerning the Accumulative Grade Point Average.

Gradually, the demonstration expanded. Students were leaving their lecture rooms to join the demonstration on campus. In this process, the Office of Admissions and Registration was forced to close by the students, while the process of payment of registration fees was taking place. The demonstration passed through the university, by almost every college, and students joined until the number of demonstrators reached 3000-4000.

As a result of the active mobilization, some faculty members joined as well, and submitted the students' ▶

demands to the administration. Delegations were formed to explain the demands to different faculty members, the Deans of Colleges, and the Heads of Departments.

The University Administration tried to play a trick, when the Vice-President, at one point, declared that the university would accept the return of those students whose AGPA is 2 points less than the minimum average. However, the students rejected this offer and threatened to continue their strike.

The demonstrations continued until February 11th, despite provocations by the police and security forces, who attempted to confiscate the I.D.cards of some students and stamp others. 50 names were put on a list at the university gate for this purpose, but these measures and others did not stop the movement.

On February 11th, while the students were meeting, university Vice-President, on behalf of the University Administration, declared the following compromises as a result of continuing demonstration and the students' insistence on their demands:

1. The return of all newly suspended students.

2. The return of formerly suspended students on the basis of lowering the required minimum by 5 points and giving them two semesters to raise their averages.

3. Promises to reconsider the curriculum in the next four months.

In light of these results, the students demanded that all confiscated I.D.cards be returned to their owners, that security or disciplinary measures not be taken against any student who participated in this action, that all faculty members who supported this action not be intimidated, and the students be given one extra week to complete the process of registration.

The demonstration then turned into a major celebration. Students chanted and sang, saluting their solidarity, which brought about this victory.

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Sham Elections of the Monarchy's Parliament in Amman

In March, provincial elections were held to fill eight empty seats in the Jordanian parliament. The decision to hold these elections came after 17 years of a freeze on parliamentary life in Jordan, whereafter the authorities abolished the National Consultative Council created in the interim, and convened the suspended National Assembly as the legislative body for both the East Bank (Jordan) and West Bank (Palestinian) in January of this year. In conjunction with this, article 73 of the constitution was amended to enable elections in the East Bank and the appointment of deputies for the West Bank, to replace those who had died in the meantime. According to Jordanian law, the National Assembly consists of 60 members, 30 representing the East Bank, and 30 representing the West Bank. In the preparations for the elections, one thing did not change: the state of martial law prevailing in the country, whereby all political parties are banned.

By the end of the nomination period, over 100 candidates were on the ballot for the eight contested seats. The candidates represented a broad spectrum of the political and social tendencies in Jordan. This includes the traditional base of the Hashemite monarchy in the city and villages, represented by candidates of the clans, as well as the big land owners, political feudalists, some bureaucrats and technocrats and liberal bourgeoisie. The religious tendency also fielded a large number of candidates, who were affiliated with organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood.

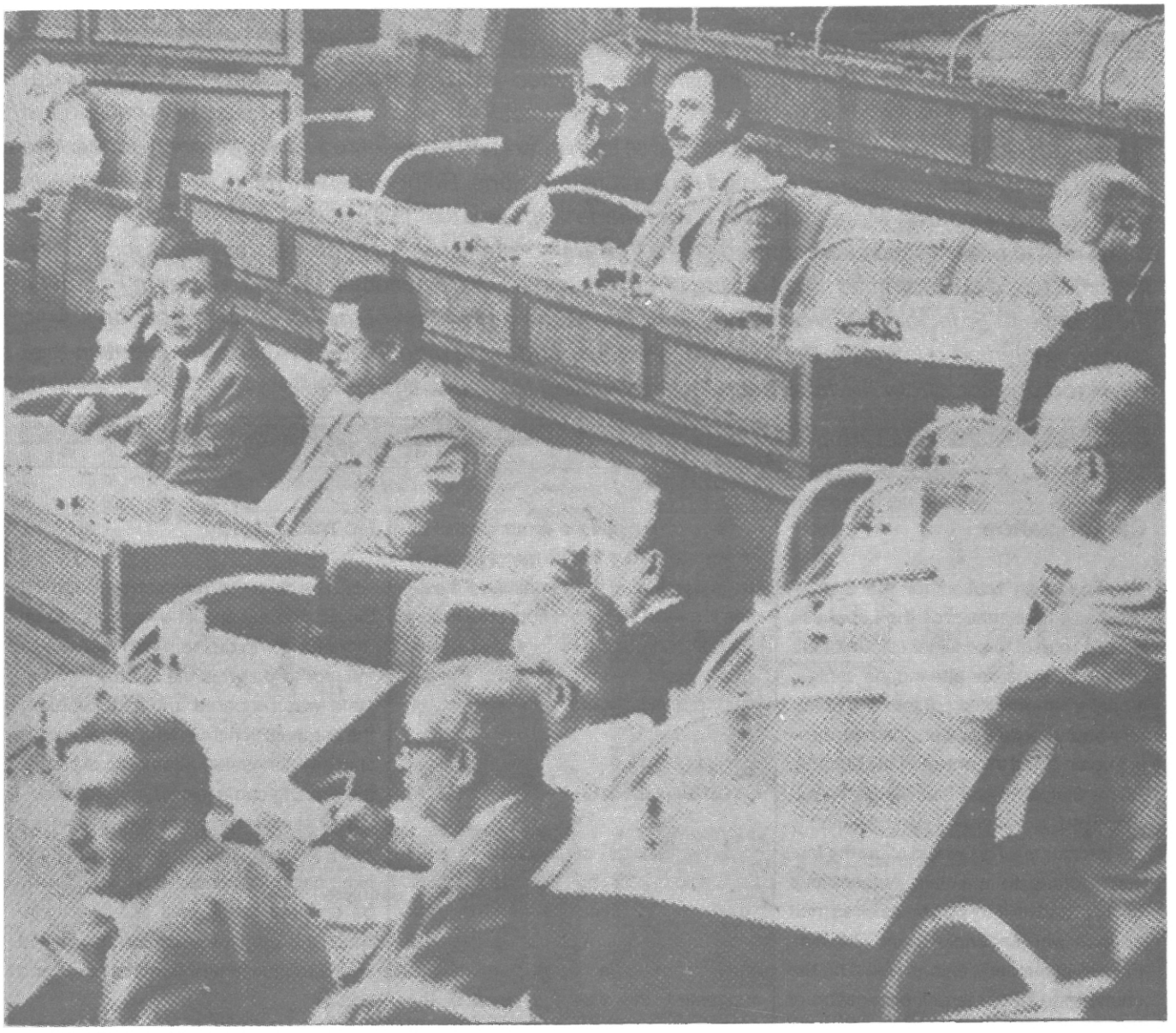
The nationalist and democratic forces were divided on the issue of participating in these elections. Some participated in spite of their reservations about the elections themselves and about the latest political manoeuvres of the Jordanian regime. They criticized the regime's reasons for reviving the old parliament, and demanded general elections in the East Bank and a freeze on the representation of the West Bank, by amending the constitution and election law of 1960.

Other democratic and nationalist forces boycotted the elections on the basis that these are not free and democratic, and only provide a cover for the political direction of the Jordanian authorities. Among these latter forces, the PFLP's branch in Jordan issued a statement clarifying the objectives of the elections as follows:

1. This move on the part of the Jordanian regime is intended to serve its plans, using this as a necessary prelude for participating in the capitulationist settlement supervised by the US administration.

2. Since the amendment of article 73 gives the regime the freedom to appoint deputies for the West Bank, it contradicts the resolutions of the Rabat Summit of 1974, which recognized the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The statement further called for amending the constitution in a way that insures: (1) freezing the West Bank's representation in the Jordanian Parliament; (2) increasing the representatives of the East Bank; and (3) holding free and democratic general elections in the East Bank only.



Jordanian Parliament in session

Traditionalists elected

The result of the election showed the correctness of the position of boycotting. The only beneficiary was the Hashemite monarchy which enacted this sham of democracy to promote its own political plans which are contradictory to the interests of the people. For one, the elections occurred in an atmosphere characterized by tribalism and sectarianism, which the regime constantly fosters to maintain its own power through distortion of the social structure of the country. Those who won the contested seats were from the traditional base of the regime. Moreover, the election procedure itself was fraudulent in terms of registration and vote-counting. This was made clear in the statement which six candidates submitted to the chairman of the parliament after the election. In this statement, the candidates discredited the registration and vote-counting procedures in Balka province.

We have no illusions that the nationalist and democratic forces can make gains in the context of the pseudo-democracy offered by the Hashemite monarchy. Rather, such elections must be opposed as the sham that they are. Instead, there must be struggle for real democracy with freedom of expression and the press, the right to organize trade unions and political parties, and abrogation of the Exceptional Military Law, to enable the masses in Jordan to exert their nationalist role in accordance with the freedom and independence of Jordan. ●

Lausanne

The Godfathers Block Secular Democratic Reforms

Official abrogation of the treaty with 'Israel', combined with Syrian efforts to induce stability in Lebanon, enabled the holding of the Lausanne conference, March 12th-20th. This, however, was not enough to insure Lebanese national reconciliation. Aside from arranging a ceasefire that temporarily reduced the level of fighting, the conference adopted no notable decisions. Rather it served to accentuate the depth of the Lebanese crisis. More than ever it was made apparent that this crisis is internal. Its causes are deep-rooted political and class contradictions that are constantly being aggravated by the fascist minority's insistence on supremacy. Still reeling under the impact of the nationalist forces' victory in February, the Lebanese Front leaders were forced to concede the abrogation of the treaty and Lebanon's Arab identity, including relations with Syria. On the other hand, they redoubled their efforts to maintain their priviliged position under the false banner of «protecting the Christians».

Cantonization

The main reason for the lack of results at Lausanne was the Lebanese Front's refusal to consider reform of the Lebanese state, for altering the confessional system would cut into the Maronite bourgeoisie's power. Instead, having again failed to control all of Lebanon, Pierre Gemayel and Camille Chamoun proposed a federal system (actually cantonization). This would allow the fascists' forces to maintain autonomous political and military power, as ell as their alliance with imperialism and Zionism. Fascist-controlled cantons would be the counterpart of the Israeli occupation of the South. Thus, the fascist proposal denotes complicity in Lebanon's partition, which the US now tacitly accepts, at least temporarily, after failure to impose a «strong central government».

Like the recent reorganization of the fascist military forces, promoting cantonization is the Lebanese Front's tactic for buying time until conditions permit a new offensive. Pierre Gemayel stated the Phalangists' delaying tactics quite openly prior to the Lausanne conference, when he said that reform could not be considered until the withdrawal of all foreign forces. By this he refers primarily to the Syrian and the remaining Palestinian forces in Lebanon, not to the Israeli occupation troops. This, rather than the verbal concessions extracted by the nationalist victory, indicates the fascists' real position.

Secularization

The fascists' cantonization model was countered by the nationalists' demand for secularization of the Lebanese state. Without going into detail about the various modalities suggested, this was the thrust of the working papers presented by Nabih Berri and Walid Jumblatt, respectively. Berri in particular highlighted the progressive content of the proposed reform by adding the demand for comprehensive social justice through a reconstruction plan for deprived and war-damaged areas. He also demanded punishment for all those responsible for the massacres and destruction in Beirut's southern suburbs, the mountains and other areas, while Jumblatt called for Amin Gemayel to be prosecuted.

No middle way

The clear contradiction between the fascist and nationalist proposals left no room for compromise. Amin Gemayel's attempt to pose as the neutral head of state was rendered impotent. Actually the contents of his working paper were a clumsily concealed attempt to preserve the existing confessional system, showing that he remains the Lebanese Front's strawman in power. According to him, deconfessionalization would only be enacted in the civil administration, while the present sectarian imbalance would remain in all influential posts and bodies.

Persistent efforts on the part of the Syrian and Saudi observors to find a common denominator ran up against the Lebanese Front's ultimate refusal of even an equitable reapportionment of representation within the existing system. Gemayel and Chamoun's bottom line was 50-50 Christian-Moslem representation in the parliament as opposed to the present 54-45 division in favour of the Christians. (No official census has been taken in Lebanon for several decades, but an unofficial poll taken

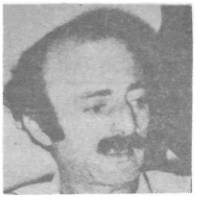
by a foreign aid agency in 1977, indicated that Moslems compose 56% of the population, Christians 44%.) On this point of protecting the Maronites' supremacy, Suleiman Franjieh defected from the National Salvation Front and joined the position of his old Lebanese Front allies.

As a result of this impasse, the conference deferred the reform issue which it had been convened to discuss. The six-point final statement reflected agreement on forming a commission to lay down a new constitutional proposal for the future of Lebanon, consisting of 32 members chosen by the President in consultation with the members of the conference; the proposal is to be presented within six months. The other content of this statement concerned the ceasefire and security plan. Here the nationalist forces gained a victory on one point: the army should return to the barracks, leaving the Internal Security Forces responsible for domestic security.

The old school politicians and the radicalized masses

After almost a decade of civil war, the fascist leadership knows that the 1943 pact is no longer viable. At that time, the Maronite bourgeoisie secured its supremacy through a deal with the Sunni bourgeoisie, at the expense of the Shiite majority. Today, the latter community has asserted itself via Amal's confrontation of the Lebanese Army, and the southern masses' uprising against the Zionist occupation. The fascist Maronite leaders had hoped to strike a deal with traditional Shiite leaders in seeking a new formula for preserving their power, but the reality of mass radicalization precludes such a deal. On the contrary, Kamal Assad, the speaker of the parliament, with whom the fascists prefer to deal, has been marginalized. Nabih Berri, who speaks for the dispossessed masses who have actually faced the Lebanese Army and Zionist occupation, has become the dominant voice of the Shiite community. Thus, Abdel Osseiran, who was previously amenable to compromise with Amin Gemayel's regime, moved closer to Berri's positions so as not to loose touch with his constituency. Also Saab Salem has historically sought a modus vivendi with the ▶

THE CONFEREES - WHO'S WHO



Walid Jumblatt : Druze; head of the Progressive Socialist Party and leading member of the National Salvation Front.

Amin Gemayel : Maronite; President of Lebanon; Politbureau member of the Phalangist Party.

Nabih Berri : Shiite; leader of the Amal movement.

Pierre Gemayel : Maronite; leader of the Phalangist Party, the main component of the Lebanese Front and the Lebanese Forces militias.

Abdel Osseiran : Shiite; former speaker of the Lebanese parliament.

Camille Chamoun : Maronite; President of the National Liberal Party and the Lebanese Front; President of Lebanon during the 1958 civil war, when he called in the Marines

Saab Salam : Sunni; leading member of the Islamic Grouping; former Prime Minister.

Suleiman Franjieh : Maronite; President of Lebanon in the 1975-76 civil war; member of the Lebanese Front until 1978; entered the conference as a leading member of the National Salvation Front.

Rashed Karami : Sunni; leading member of the National Salvation Front; former Prime Minister.

Delegation of the National Salvation Front

ruling Maronite bourgeoisie in line with his own class interests. However, the fascists' refusal to give meaningful concessions and, on the other hand, the radicalization of the masses in his West Beirut constituency, prevented him from striking a course contradictory to Jumblatt and Beri at the conference.

In contrast, the class interests of Franjieh's particular constituency in the North of Lebanon are well served by the present confessional imbalance. Though opposing the Lebanese Front on its alliance with 'Israel' rather than the Arab world, Franjieh reverted to the old school when the question became one of secular-democratic reform.

Though the masses' radicalization had an effect on the alignments at the conference, the nationalist forces were unable to impose the internal reform for which the people have been fighting. This is not surprising in view of the situation surrounding Lebanon. Behind the intransigence of the Lebanese Front looms the red line drawn by the Zionists. Uri Lubrani, Israeli coordinator of affairs in Lebanon, was present in the city of Lausanne. He drew more than one Lebanese leader aside to make threats, most notably that Israel would disrupt the new ceasefire if new security arrangements were not negotiated with 'Israel'. A week before the conference convened, the Zionists' air raid on Aley and Bhamdoun had shown their intention to continue violent intervention beyond the occupation lines. The bombing of the mountains came the day after fifteen Israeli soldiers were injured in a series of attacks in South Lebanon, and was thus billed as retaliation. It is notable, however, that the attack was staged the same day that the Lebanese parliament convened for the purpose of officially abrogating the treaty.

Seen in this perspective, a clear lesson can be drawn from the results at Lausanne: The demands of Lebanon's majority will only be fulfilled by continuing to combine confrontation of the fascist regime and forces with persistent armed struggle against the Zionist occupiers. In this respect, the masses of the South are leading the way with their ongoing uprisings. This is in stark contrast to the old school politicians who predominated at the Lausanne conference, and again showed their incapacity to solve the Lebanese crisis. ●

There are differences in the fascist ranks between the wing most closely linked to the Israelis, and those who emphasize their independence as «Lebanese nationalists». As is normal for any force suffering a setback, these differences escalated in the wake of the nationalist advances. A split, however, is not conceivable. If there has been such a tendency, it was precluded by the recent regrouping which was most likely orchestrated by the top fascist leadership. The Lebanese Forces have been reorganized and acquired a political profile, while fascists behind the occupation lines enlisted in what was formerly Saad Haddad's militias.

'Politicization' of the Lebanese Forces

The reorganization of the Lebanese Forces started at the turn of the year. All commanders submitted their resignations to Fadi Frem, to make way for new appointments to strengthen the militias after their rout from the mountains, and to prepare for the army's planned assault on West Beirut. Besides consolidating Frem's leadership, the new appointments created a political center headed by Antoine Bridli. Elie Hobeika, who led the Phalangists in the Sabra-Shatila massacre, remained as security chief. Greater command authority was assigned to Samir Geagea, who is also notorious for massacres, including the 1977 murder in Ehden of 30 Christians, family and supporters of Suleiman Franjieh. Geagea's first responsibility was previously to the Phalangists; now he is seconded to the Lebanese Forces.

This reorganization, especially the creation of a political center, served the fascists well in the wake of the nationalists' February victory. The Phalangist hierarchy enacted a new 'division of labour': The Lebanese Forces continue to propagate the traditional line

Fascists Regroup

«We are now back to the 5th of June, 1982... All the political results of the Israeli operation are now wiped out.» This was the Lebanese Forces' reaction to the abrogation of the treaty with 'Israel', as articulated by their foreign affairs director, Naoum Farah. Fadi Frem, commander-in-chief of the militias condemned the government of his brother-in-law, Amin Gemayel, for «submitting to Syrian demands». There was talk of division in the fascist ranks, with Phalangist Party chief Pierre Gemayel backing his son Amin's tactics, while the Lebanese Forces opposed.

of alliance with 'Israel' and hate of the Arabs, leaving the party free to follow along with Amin Gemayel's maneuvers to retain the presidency. Thus, we witnessed a sudden escalation in political statements by the Lebanese Forces in early March. At the same time, they openly resumed tax collection, and security and administrative functions of the Lebanese Army in East Beirut. Under their auspices, the so-called National Christian Council was formed to resist Syrian influence and work for cantonization, activating the role of extreme-right Maronite monks like Abbot Boulos Naaman. Moreover, the Lebanese Forces opened an office in Jerusalem.

The clearest indication of the new division of labour is the appointment of Karim Pakradouni, Phalangist Party Politbureau member, as political adviser to the Lebanese Forces. He is among the party's most dynamic strategists and has previously been a key figure in its indirect control of the state, as when he served as former President Sarkis' personal councillor from 1976, meanwhile grooming Beshir Gemayel for the presidency. Now his task is to give the Lebanese Foeces a political profile which is distinct from, but not contradictory to the Phalangist Party and the President. In line with this, the Lebanese Forces are working on a new political program. In an interview with the Lebanese weekly,*Monday Morning*, Pakradouni outlined the three main points of this program: «One: The defense of Christian regions by establishing 'red lines' around these areas. These red lines are both military and political; the military lines being mobilization of the Christian population to defend these regions, and the political ones being the contacts which the Lebanese Forces are undertaking at the regional and international levels... Two: Proposing, at the national level, a plan for a federal republic with a view to achieving a comprehensive settlement of the Lebanese problem... the logic of reforms is not enough. We need a complete overhaul of the Lebanese political system... Three: Whereas the 1943 National Pact was based on an agreement between the Maronites and the Sunnites, we are becoming more and more convinced that the New National Pact will have to come about through an agreement between the Maronites and the Shiites, while not excluding the other constituent groups in the nation.»

With such a program the Lebanes Forces can keep their military forces and hard-line base mobilized for the inevitable coming confrontation; this is explicit in the first point. Points two and three present an alternative course for enacting the cantonization proposed by the Lebanese Front at Lausanne, and flatly rejected by all nationalist forces. The Lebanese Forces' approach is dividing the nationalist forces along confessional lines in order to make separate deals. This was the meaning of Fadi Frem's call to the Moslems to engage in a direct dialogue «above the heads of the fathers» who failed to reach results at Lausanne. The aim is to make cantonization a reality without its being officially adopted. Pakradouni was quite open about this in the above-quoted interview: «In order to fight, the Lebanese Army cannot be mixed... The collapse of the Lebanese Army in Shahar al Gharbi (mountain area near Souq al Gharb) and its refusal to fight in Beirut demonstrate the need for another formula...based on the idea of decentralization...» He went on to advocate a Shiite army in Shiite areas, a Druze army in Druze areas, and the Lebanese Forces in Christian areas. Through their desired alliance with the Shiites, the Lebanese Forces propose enacting cantonization in the South if the Israelis should stage further pull-backs. However, this planned alliance is contradicted by the fascists' practice, especially now in the South.

New proxy for 'Israel'

The Israelis were deeply disturbed by the nationalists' advance, yet it had one bonus: Large numbers of fascist militiamen headed South and soon joined the Free Lebanon Army, which the Israelis had needed to refurnish after the death of Saad Haddad. The first week of March, a delegation from the South went to 'Israel' to map out a strategy for «defending» the South and returning to the Kharroub coastal area north of the Awali line. As a result, the Free Lebanon Army was expanded and dubbed the South Lebanon Army.The Zionists have intensified their arming and training of this force to be the Lebanese party involved in new «security» arrangements, and their proxy in case of future pullbacks. In early April, Former Lebanese Army Major-General Antoine Lahd, a Maronite from the Shouf

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and member of chamoun's National Liberal Party, assumed command of the South Lebanon Army. He was once chief-of-staff for military intelligence and has served in all areas of Lebanon in the course of his career. He «retired» at the early age of 54, while serving as the Lebanese Army's commander in the Shouf last year. He is thus representative of those fascists who moved south in the regrouping that followed the nationalist victory.

Lahd claims to be acting within the realm of Lebanese legality. The failure of the Amin Gemayel government to refute this proves that the Phalangist authority has in fact relinquished the South to the Israeli occupiers. At the end of March, Amal leader Nabih Berri challenged the regime to state its position. Berri pointed out that it is not enough to abrogate the May 17th accord when it is actually being implemented on the ground through the South Lebanon Army. He also indicated that Lahd has commercial interests in the South which he will certainly use his new position to exploit. Berri called on southerners to confront this army for what it is: an instrument of 'Israel'. By mid-March, the Lebanese National Resistance Front had made seven attacks on these forces. ●

South Lebanon

The Confrontation Escalates

Due to the nature of the conflict between the Zionist occupiers and the masses of the South, a small village can become the focal point and symbol of the overall confrontation. Such has been the case with Jibsheet, southwest of Nabatiyeh, in the recent period. The events in this village were one of the catalysts of the anti-occupation protests which swept the South as the month of March turned into April.

The story of Jibsheet dates back to February 16th, when the village sheikh, Ragheb Harb, an outspoken critic of the occupation, was shot by «unidentified» men at his home. Southerners were sure that the Israelis were behind the murder. This was confirmed in late March, when Amal captured two of the killers (members of the Israeli-sponsored National Guard militias) in Beirut, where they had been sent to assasinate Amal officials. One of the captives revealed that the order to assasinate Sheikh Harb had been given by the Israeli military governor in Nabatiyeh, and that he had been paid 10,000 Lebanese pounds (US $ 1,800) for his part in the killing, while others of his gang had surrounded Jibsheet, firing at anyone who tried to leave.

Then, on March 28th, an Israeli armored column pushed its way into Jibsheet. One unit occupied the religious meeting place, while another headed for the home of the new prayer leader, Sheikh Abdelkarem Obeid. Fearing for their new sheikh, the people gathered in the square and began to throw stones at the invaders. The Israelis opened fire, hitting about 20 people, some of whom died instantly, while others bled to death because the occupation troops prevented the enterance of ambulances. At the same time, roads leading to the village were straffed from helicopters to prevent anyone from leaving or entering. Reporters were kept out of the area for several days. Later it was known that six villagers had died, while 12 others sustained serious injury. The Israelis also arrested about 500 villagers, including the sheikh. According to the International Red Cross, 225 of these are now in Ansar.

Lebanese fascists of the South Lebanon Army accompanied the Israeli troops besieging Jibsheet. Israeli media reported only three deaths and attributed these to the fascists, giving the whole incident the character of a mini-Sabra-Shatila. Reports from the neighboring villages at the time confirm that it was a planned operation with the village having been encircled by the IDF from the preceding night.

On the same day, the Israeli army closed the Batar-Jezzine mountain road, the South's only passage to the rest of Lebanon, after the February battles blocked the coastal highway. They cut telephone and telex lines as well, and imposed curfews in several areas. The occupiers claimed the closure was for the purpose of clearing a mine field where four Israeli soldiers had been wounded. Yet the cut-off continued with only intermittent let-ups, fueling suspicion that this is the Israelis' punitive response to the abrogation of the May 17th agreement, and that they will isolate the South until their fascist proxies can take over «security».

Nabatiyeh, Saida and later Sour went on strike, protesting the Jibsheet massacre and the isolation of the South. Rallies occurred in many places with people burning tires and building barricades to keep out the occupiers' convoys. At Shahabiyeh, this led to a clash when Israeli troops opened fire on children piling stones. Villagers, armed with makeshift clubs converged on the Israeli convoy, which was held up for two hours until UNIFIL intervened to diffuse the situation.

Continuing arrest campaigns and earlier killings had precipitated the masses' rage: In early March, two Lebanese died of injuries sustained when the Israelis had opened fire on a demonstration in Maarakah, on February 24th. On March 6th, a youth was killed in Kanaa, when the occupiers fired on a crowd protesting the arrest of village residents. Two days later, a woman and four children were wounded when the Israelis opened fire on a busy street in Saida, after an attack on their forces. Saida's

port was closed for eleven days in early March in a clear-cut case of collective punishment, after three consecutively timed bombs wounded eleven soldiers of an Israeli patrol entering the harbor, one of whom later died. The port was again closed April 3rd and 4th, for «unexplained reasons», i.e., more punisment for the steady mass and armed resistance to occupation.

In the context of the wide-spread protests, the Lebanese National Resistance Front made yet a further escalation of its military operations, that now average several daily. On April 1st, there were two attacks on Israeli patrols in the vicinity of Saida. In the center of the city, an explosion wounded three soldiers and wrecked an armored vehicle. The Israelis sprayed fire in all, directions, damaging ten buildings and fifteen cars.

Two days later, there was a roadside bomb against a patrol in the coastal highway near Saida, while a RPG attack in Nabatiyeh wounded seven Israelis and demobilized two of their armored vehicles. Three Israelis were wounded by an explosion at the Litani River bridge on the coastal highway the same day. On April 4th, an Israeli military vehicle was set on fire, causing a number of casualties. The next day, a grenade attack on an Israeli patrol in Saida, injured at least one soldier seriously. The Israelis exploded a sound bomb to frighten the people and began firing indiscriminately, wounding seven civilians. Ten more residents of Saida were arrested, and all shops ordered closed. Earlier in the day, the IDF had evicted families from buildings around the place they use as a military intelligence and interrogation center, shooting to speed the eviction, damaging other houses nearby and cutting electricity lines.

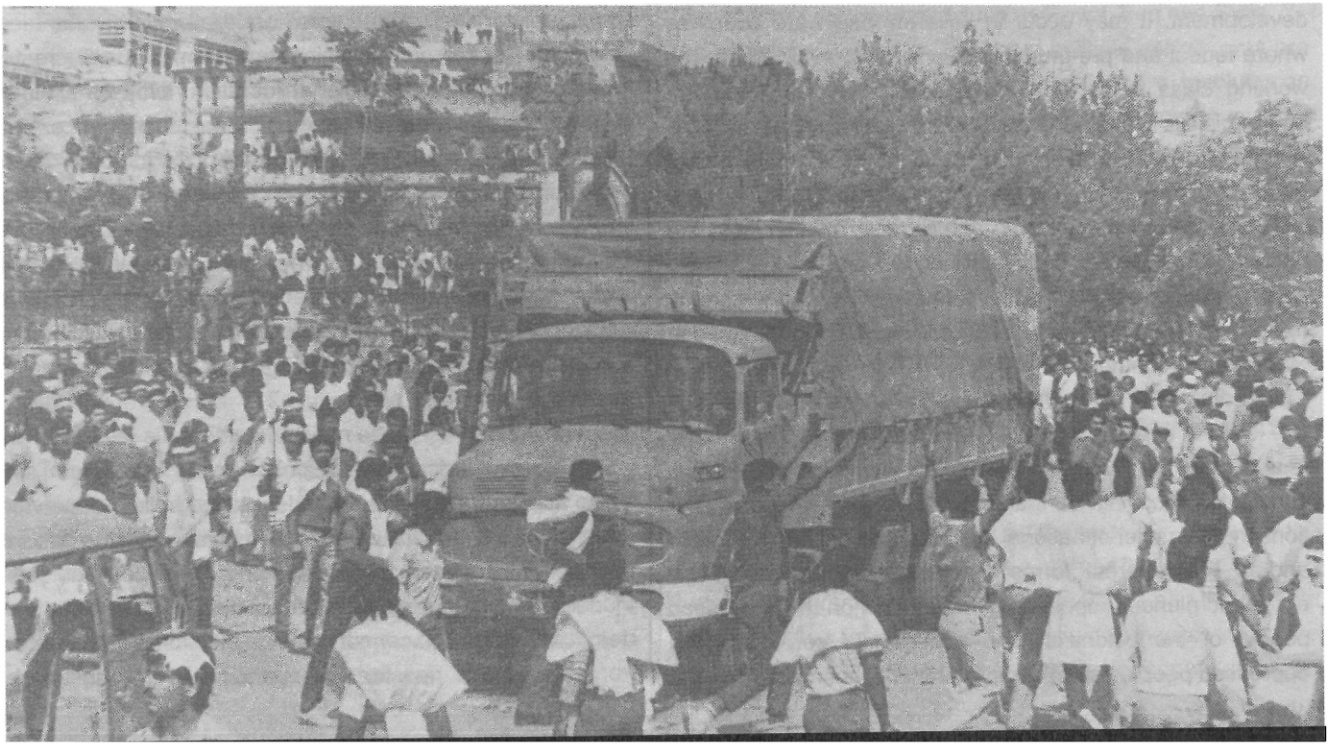
Confrontation rises at the Beqaa frontlines

In a close cooperation between the Lebanese nationalist forces and revolutionary Palestinian organizations, attacks on the occupation troops in the southern Beqaa have been stepped up. In the last days of March, eight Israeli soldiers were wounded in a series of operations in this area. Then, on April 1st, the IDF moved tanks units forward and bombarded nationalist positions here for the first time in over a year. The following days were characterized by military build-up, intermittent exchanges of fire between the Syrian and Israeli forces, and frequent Israeli overflights of the Beqaa.

Fearing the revived war of attrition on this front, and its spill-over into the already resistant South, Israeli Minister of War Arens divurged from the Israeli opposition to UNIFIL in the South of Lebanon, to advocate the stationing of UN troops along the frontlines in the southern Beqaa. This attempt to neutralize Syrian support to the anti-occupation resistance coincides with the Zionist aim of partitioning Lebanon and isolating the South in order to annex at least its water resources.

However, like the Zionist terror campaign against the masses of the South, this plan will ultimately fail. The war of attrition against the occupiers has become an abiding mass phenomenon, linking Lebanese and Palestinian freedom fighters, linking the heroic struggle of small southern villages with the nationalist forces in the Beirut and Beqaa areas. On this basis, the Lebanese National Resistance Front can only continue to escalate its operations, inflicting ever heavier casualties in the Zionist ranks. The latest example is the daring explosion of an Israeli military headquarters in Deir Kanoun, northeast of Sour, where at least eight Zionists were killed and many others injured. ●

Mass resistance to occupation in the South



PFLP Position Paper

The National Democratic Revolution

In our last issue we reported on the seminar held in Aden on the subject of the national democratic revolution and the experience of South Yemen. There were selections from the presentations made by Comrade Ali Nasser Mohammad, General Secretary of the Yemeni Socialist Party, and by the Greek Communist Party. In this issue we print a translation of the paper presented by the PFLP at the seminar.

The nature, tasks, dynamic forces and perspectives of the national democratic revolution

The national democratic revolution is a bourgeois democratic revolution of a new type, induced by the contemporary stage of capitalism's development into imperialism, and the resulting oppression of the peoples of the three continents (Asia, Africa and Latin America) by world colonialism. Specifically, the emergence of the national democratic revolution coincided with the present stage of the general crisis of capitalism, which began when capitalism was defeated by the end of the second world war, and socialism became a world system encompassing many European and Asian countries. This meant the emergence of new international conditions favorable to the peoples' struggle for national independence and social progress in the colonized and subordinate countries.

The national democratic revolution may occur in a number of countries with differing levels of economic and social development. It may occur in severely backward countries where feudal and pre-feudal relations still prevail, where the working class is not yet crystallized as a class, and the bourgeoisie is still in the formative stage, as is the case in many African countries. It may occur in countries where capitalist relations of production have developed sufficiently for a working class to be constituted in one form or another, and the national bourgeoisie to be crystallized to the degree of being a class with economic and social influence. This is the case in many Arab countries, such as Egypt, Algeria and Iraq, and in other Asian countries.

The national democratic revolution arises on the basis of two kinds of contradictions: external and internal. The sharp, antagonistic contradiction with colonialism and imperialism constitutes the main contradiction. This gives these revolutions the character of national liberation, hostile to imperialism and to the different forms of colonial subordination and economic plunder imposed by imperialism on the oppressed people of the colonized and subordinate countries. The oppressed people aspire to political and economic emancipation and to establishing independent national states. Therefore, the upsurge of the national liberation movements in the three continents has contributed greatly to deepening the general crisis of contemporary capitalism and to the collapse of the colonial empires.

In as much as the peoples' struggle for liberation is against the political and economic hegemony of imperialism, to the same extent it attacks the essence of the capitalist relations of production... In this context, Lenin pointed out that the struggle for national liberation is a part of the revolutionary socialist transformation of the world: «The socialist revolution will not only be the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in every country, but the struggle of the colonies and countries that are subordinated and oppressed by imperialism, against world imperialism». Thus, from the point of view of the world revolutionary process, liberating the oppressed people from imperialism corresponds not only to their national interests, but also to the class interests of the international proletariat and socialism. Moreover, the class struggle waged by the international proletariat, first and foremost the socialist countries, plays a major role in abolishing capitalism. Thus, it creates favorable conditions for national liberation revolutions, aiding them in achieving freedom and national independence. This provides the objective basis for the unity of the forces hostile to imperialism: the national liberation movements, the socialist countries and the working class in the capitalist countries. Strengthening the alliance between the world socialist system and workers' movement on the one hand, and the national liberation movements in the three continents on the other, assumes great significance for the coming struggle against imperialism.

The main thrust of the national democratic revolution is a liberation revolution against colonialism and imperialism, aiming to achieve national independence and build independent national states. Yet this can only be achieved on the basis of specific forms of internal contradictions. The feudal and semi-feudal relations that exist in the countries prone to national democratic liberation cannot continue indefinitely. On the contrary, the time is ripe for these relations to vanish and be

Ali Naser Mohammed,the revolutionary leader

replaced with more developed relations of production. Thus, the national democratic revolution is required to resolve these internal contradictions.

Hence, the tasks of the national democratic revolution include the following: enacting agrarian reform to the benefit of the working peasants; fostering the growth of industrial and agricultural production; expanding the internal market; cancelling the exploitative social and economic relations and forms of class oppression enforced by colonial rule and by the class hegemony of feudalist and reactionary forces in these societies. Furthermore, taking measures to spread democracy gives these revolutions their democratic character.

The dynamic class forces, leadership, tasks and perspectives for development of the national democratic revolution vary due to differences in the level of social and economic development, national characteristics and the political conditions of the struggle in the countries concerned, and due to differences in the regional and international alliances.

The class forces with interests in the national democratic revolution are the working class, the peasants, the petit bourgeoisie and the middle strata of the population. Also the national bourgeoisie may play a role in this revolution. However, it is not long before the role of this class decreases and vanishes, due to its fear of the upsurge of the mass movement and its own dual nature.

The major characteristic of the contemporary world is the transition from capitalism to socialism. The balance of class forces on the international level is continuously tilting in favor of the forces of liberation, socialism and peace. Thus, national democratic revolutions were victorious in many countries of the three continents; the great majority won national independence and established independent states.

At the same time, some peoples with differing degrees of social and economic development not only achieved national democratic liberation, but moved into the stage of socialist transformation. Lenin declared that while fighting to eradicate colonial oppression and achieve national independence, the oppressed people are simultaneously struggling against the basis of capitalist exploitation. This has been substantiated: Some peoples, having abolished colonial rule, the positions of imperialism and the remnants of feudalism, were able to embark on the transition to socialism while undertaking the tasks of the national democratic revolution.

The revolutions that have occurred in the three continents, from the end of the second world war until today, are national democratic in nature. Accordingly, the major tasks of these revolutions were antagonistic to imperialism and the pre-capitalist relations of production.

Other revolutions have failed to accomplish all the national democratic tasks, were unable to accomplish them fully, or to create the material and spiritual conditions conducive to socialist transformation. This can be traced to the nature of the social classes and political parties that led these revolutions.

There was a time when the national bourgeoisie (comprising all its strata, petit and middle, its political parties and leadership) had the opportunity to lead such revolutions, as happened in a number of Arab countries. Yet this bourgeoisie was unable to lead the national democratic revolution to its logical end, due to its class limitations, vacillation and fear of the mass movement. Rather the bourgeoisie stopped halfway and eventually repudiated the national democratic course.

On the other hand, national democratic revolution occurred in countries such as Cuba, China, Korea, Vietnam and other countries in the Southeast Asia. In some of these countries, the level of social and economic development was lower than that in Arab countries such as Egypt, Iraq and Syria. Yet the working class, via its vanguard political parties, was prepared to play a leading role. It established a revolutionary alliance with the peasant masses, and with the urban and rural petit bourgeoisie. This enabled these national democratic revolutions against colonialism and feudalism to accomplish not only the tasks of the national revolution, but to embark directly on the transition to socialist revolution as well.

From 1905, Lenin, the leader of the great October Revolution, was always vigilant about clarifying to Russian revolutionaries, and to all revolutionaries of the world, the significance of struggling to secure working class leadership in the bourgeois revolution. In his book, *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, he emphasized: «Marxism teaches the proletariat not to keep aloof from the bourgeois revolution, not to be indifferent to it, not to allow the leadership of the revolution to be assumed by the bourgeoisie, but, on the contrary, to take a most energetic part in it, to fight most resolutely for consistent proletarian democratism, for the revolution to be carried to its conclusion. We cannot get out of ▶

the bourgeois-democratic boundaries of the Russian revolution, but we can vastly extend these boundaries, and within these boundaries we can and must fight for the interests of the proletariat, for its immediate needs and for conditions that will make it possible to prepare its forces for the future complete victory.» (V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p,454).

The strategy and tactics of the communist movement formulated by Lenin, concerning the possibility and need for working class leadership in the bourgeois revolution, are no longer mere theoretical hypotheses. Rather they have been confirmed by many experiences in many countries, despite differences in the social and economic development and political conditions. The October Revolution led by the Bolsheviks is a classical model of the possibility of the working class and its communist party taking the leadership of the bourgeois revolution, after the bourgeoisie became incapable, in the conditions of imperialism, to lead this revolution to its final end. Moreover, the popular democratic revolutions that occurred in a number of East European countries were national liberation movements hostile to fascism. These revolutions, which were led by the working class and its parties, were also democratic, since their tasks were hostile to the pre-capitalist relations of production and the remnants of the Middle Ages. While implementing the necessary transformations in the bourgeois democratic framework more deeply and decisively, these revolutions began the transition to socialist transformation under the leadership of the working class.

The national democratic revolutions led by the working class in Asian countries (such as China, North Korea, Vietnam and later in Cambodia and Laos) against colonialism, imperialism and the feudal relations of production, took a course of economic and social development that prevented the growth of capitalist relations of production. Thus, they embarked on socialist development by creating the material and spiritual conditions, and the forces of production needed to establish and advance socialist relations of production. For this reason, the potential of the working class for leading the national democratic revolution is not a mere theoretical hypothesis. On the contrary, it became a reality, a practical formula that finds different applications in many countries.

The revolutionary essence of the strategy and tactics of the democratic revolution has nothing in common with trends that aim to separate mechanically between the democratic and the socialist revolution.

Yemeni fighters,the spark of the revolution

The socioeconomic conditions that led to the impotence of the ruling Arab bourgeoisie in the national democratic revolution

Due to the weakness of the economic and social development in the Arab countries, and consequently of the working class, the national bourgeoisie assumed the leading role in the Arab national liberation movement. In the meantime, the working class participated in this movement to varying degrees. The bourgeoisie established their own states in most of the Arab countries, whereas the Zionist-imperialist invasion of Palestine placed tremendous obstacles in the path of the Palestinian liberation movement's endeavours to achieve national democratic revolution and an independent national state. The establishment of the aggressive, racist state of 'Israel' created a direct threat to the Arab national liberation movement and its national states in Syria and Egypt. Moreover, it became a factor in wearing down their material and human potentials and hindering their independent economic and social development.

Nonetheless, the petit and middle bourgeoisie that assumed the leadership of the national democratic revolution in some Arab countries, was able to throw off the political, economic and military fetters of colonialism and achieve a certain level of economic and social development. This included building national industry, implementing agrarian reform to varying degrees, and nationalizing some of the productive sector and foreign trade, thus establishing a public sector and improving the level of the working class and all the working people. These measures remained in the framework of capitalist development.

The socioeconomic changes that occurred in these Arab countries were enacted in an atmosphere of revoking democratic liberties. The regimes deliberately neglected the role of the popular masses, especially the working class. As a result, tremendous changes occurred in the social structure of these countries. These changes allowed for the rapid growth of bureaucratic, parasitic bourgeois strata, not to mention the traditional big bourgeoisie. This in turn hindered natural growth and prevented the achievement of the tasks of the national democratic revolution for which the Arab people had struggled, and which the bourgeoisie eventually renounced.

The socioeconomic policy of the ruling Arab bourgeoisie

relied on the huge oil revenues, especially after the price of crude oil quadrupled in 1973. This rapidly enriched certain strata of the middle and petit bourgeoisie, which were connected with the ruling strata by political relationships and/or clan and regional loyalties. Furthermore, it led to these strata becoming a parasitic and bureaucratic bourgeoisie engaged in marginal (non-productive) fields of the economy, as middlemen between the state institutions and the international monopolies, in exchange for huge commissions or bribes. This money is then divided among big state officials, ministers, directors and government economic administrators.

Meanwhile, the great majority of the petit bourgeoisie (merchants, employees, small workshops owners, etc.) and the urban workers experienced more economic and social deprivation. Their share in the national income decreased, while the gap separating them from the richer strata in the society increased.

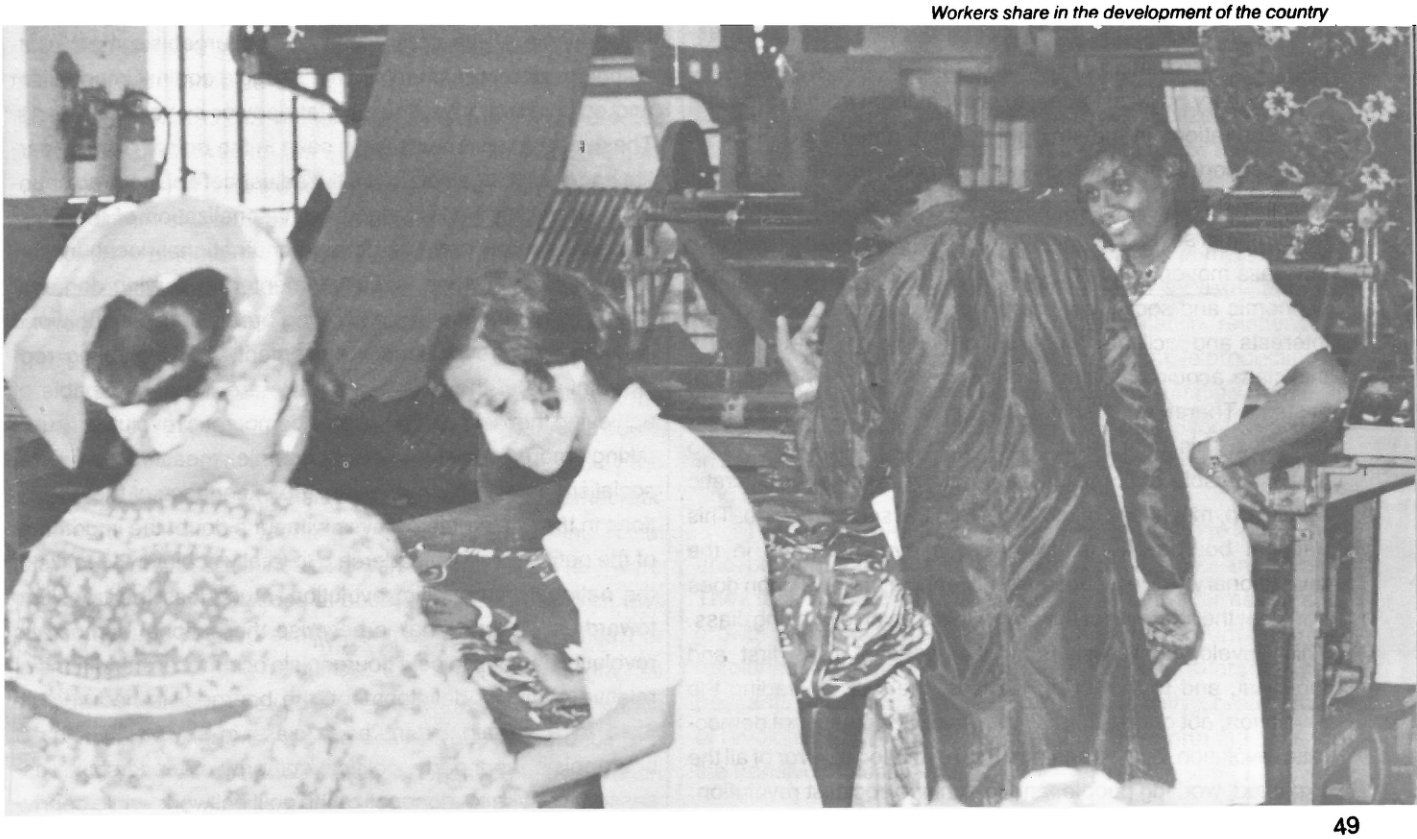
The same thing occured in agriculture. There was mass migration from the rural areas to the city, motivated by the needs of industrial growth and of enlarging the consumptive sector of the economy that depended on oil revenues. Agriculture and animal husbandry declined sharply. The countryside could no longer supply the growing food needs. The middle and rich farmers began to flourish at the expense of the small peasants and rural proletariat. Gradually capitalist agriculture became predominant in accordance with the bourgeoisie's policy of renouncing agricultural reform.

The social origins of the forces and parties that led and still lead the Arab liberation movement in these countries, is urban and rural sectors of the middle and petit bourgeoisie. However, the socioeconomic changes implemented by this leadership played a major role in the growth of the parasitic,bureaucratic and big bourgeoisie, which are linked to the world capitalist market. With some exceptions, this leadership and the ruling parties basically represent the interests of the wealthy strata of the bourgeoisie.

This distorted path of capitalist development followed by these countries in the framework of subordination to the imperialist, neocolonial economy, has had long range effects on social conditions. Broad strata of the bourgeoisie were led into organic linkage with the capitalist market; they were subordinated not only economically, but politically and ideologically as well. Thus, these strata definitively lost their nationalist, anti-imperialist sentiment. This was embodied in the economic trend declared by Sadat, known as the open door policy, which emerged in other countries under different banners, such as the policy of using western technology as a method for rapid, explosive development, and consequently neglecting and abandoning state projects in favor of the private capitalist sector, as happened in Egypt and Iraq, etc. This is also evident in the sharp increase in imports, mainly consumer goods from the imperialist countries, depending on the huge financial resources provided by Arab oil production and price increases. This involves not only the oil-producing countries, but other Arab countries as well.

Despite the ruling bourgeoisie's demagogy about democracy, human rights and what is called the «state of institutions», the fascist, dictatorial tendencies of bourgeois rule have been reinforced by revoking more of the political and ▶

Workers share in the development of the country



The new revolutionary generation in South Yemen

social democracy achieved by the popular masses through long, hard struggle. Moreover, the power of the state's repressive apparatus, used against the mass movement, political forces and the opposition, is increasing. As the social base of these regimes shrinks, the fascist tendencies grow. Suppression and harassment increases against the masses and revolutionary political forces, to prevent them from expressing their aspirations in the struggle against imperialism, Zionism and reaction, in order to achieve their rights and freedom.

The ruling bourgeoisie that led the national democratic revolution in several Arab countries, with the help of the working class movement, achieved national independence. It took economic and social measures that met its own selfish class interests and facilitated capitalist development. Furthermore, this class acquired common interests with the world capitalist system. Therefore, it shifted to conservative and retrogade positions. This means that the ruling national bourgeoisie is no longer capable of continuing to lead the national democratic revolution, much less of moving it into the socialist stage. This national bourgeoisie is no longer a dynamic force in the revolutionary process, because advancing the revolution does not meet the interests of the bourgeoisie as an exploiting class. This development assigns to the working class first and foremost, and to the toiling masses, the task of leading the revolution, not only to fulfill all the tasks of the national democratic revolution, but to transform this revolution in favor of all the exploited, working people, and to achieve socialist revolution.

The national democratic revolution in South Yemen - a vanguard experience

In several Arab countries (Egypt, Iraq and others), the representatives of the petit and middle bourgeoisie made outstanding accomplishments in the struggle against imperialism and colonialism, after seizing state power by various means. These accomplishments were seen in the defeat of the tripartite aggression against Egypt, the adjustment of the Arab countries' share in oil production, the nationalization of the Suez Canal and many other big foreign and national (local) institutions; agrarian reform was implemented to varying degrees. This created the impression among broad circles in the world and the Arab revolutionary movement, that the ruling representatives of the petit bourgeoisie are not only capable of achieving the tasks of the national democratic revolution, but of taking more decisive socioeconomic measures towards socialism as well. Nevertheless, the experience of the revolutions in these countries proves without a doubt the impotence of the petit bourgeois leadership to totally achieve the tasks of the national democratic revolution, much less the transition towards socialism. That is because the national democratic revolution led by the petit bourgeoisie occurred in conditions of relative capitalist development; the bourgeoisie had crystallized to a certain extent as a class in society. The petit bourgeoisie, as a party, political authority or leadership, possessed a desire to monopolize the political work, while depriv-

ing the working class and its vanguard parties of democratic liberties. Overt and covert attacks on communism were launched. There were the prevailing petit bourgeois illusions concerning what is termed «the unity of the working people», «social harmony» and different modes of «national and local socialism».

In contrast, the revolutionary experience in Democratic Yemen represents a different model, which shows the possibility of petit bourgeois, revolutionary democratic forces leading the national democratic revolution towards the socialist perspective. This is because this experience occured in distinct economic, social and political conditions related to the specific balance of class forces in South Yemen.

Besides British colonial domination, the economic situation in South Yemen was characterized by the domination of feudal and semi-feudal relations of production, manifest in the sultanate system. Capitalist relations of production were insufficiently developed, and the bourgeoisie had not crystallized as a class. Meanwhile, the other exploiting strata, such as merchants, comprador and the agents of foreign companies, were subordinate to international monopoly capital; their economic and political interests were intertwined with international monopoly capitalism. They were thus a class force hostile to the dynamic classes and strata in the national democratic revolution.

The Yemeni working class, however, had achieved a certain level of growth and acquired class and national experience while fighting the capitalist exploitation in the British installations. The class alignment in South Yemen before the victory of the national democratic revolution had a unique character, not present in many countries prone to national democratic liberation: The emergence of a working class possessing class and national experience, while its class opponent, «the Yemeni bourgeoisie», was not definitively constituted. This created one of the objectives for the accumulating role of the Yemeni working class, and its immense influence on the subsequent development of the revolution in a progressive direction. This enabled the achievement of the tasks of the national democratic revolution and created economic, social and ideological prerequisites for developing the revolution towards its socialist perspective.

There is another characteristic which distinguishes the development in Democratic Yemen from the other Arab countries where the national democratic revolution was led by the petit and middle bourgeoisie: The revolutionary democratic elements that led the revolution were from the toiling social strata, more closely connected with the masses. They were removed from the influence of bourgeois ideology, which was and remains to be the prevailing ideology in Arab societies. For the leadership of the revolution, this simplified the gradual transition, without great obstacles, towards Marxist-Leninist thought and the relatively rapid break with bourgeois ideology.

The victory of the national revolution, and the declaration of independence on November 30, 1967, put the southern part of Yemen at a crossroads between capitalism and socialism; between limiting the revolution to the bourgeois domain, or unleashing its consequent development. Achieving political independence and directing a blow against feudalism is nothing other than the beginning of the achievement of the tasks of the national democratic revolution. The question was now posed how to develop it. This question led to a hard struggle between the revolutionary and the conservative forces, and between the most revolutionary elements and the reformist leadership. The revolutionary democratic leadership was able to decide this question in favor of the revolution and the toiling masses in the Corrective Move of June 1969. This set the country on the path of achieving the tasks of the national democratic revolution with a socialist perspective.

Instead of slackness, letting the revolution develop spontaneously, the leadership of the revolution and the state aimed at laying an overall plan for developing the country, overstepping capitalism and creating the economic, social and ideological prerequisites for moving towards socialist development. An organic part of this plan was restricting the growth of the emerging national bourgeoisie, i.e. securing the required conditions for preventing capitalist elements from becoming a class, and their institutions from becoming economically independent structures. Thus, the revolution neither allowed the automatic growth of the capitalist elements, nor made concessions to them.

Through the first three-year and five-year plans for development, the revolutionary government created progressive economic models in the different sectors of production. After a radical agrarian reform to the benefit of the toiling peasants, state and cooperative sectors emerged alongside the private and mixed sectors, all operating under the supervision of the state. Moreover, blows were dealt to the comprador and big land owners; foreign enterprises were nationalized, in particular the oil refinery. The revolution aimed to follow the principle of scientific economic planning, which played a big role in resolving many economic, social and cultural tasks.

The following measures were enacted: a comprehensive program for the development of national industry and for rebuilding agriculture, free of the exploitative relations of feudalism and capitalism; spreading cooperative production in the rural areas; the state's establishment of a national system of trade and finance in order to provide funding for investment in the productive sectors; the advancement of national culture and educational programs.

These measures dealt a gigantic blow to the economic and political influence of the exploiting classes and strata. They thus created conditions conducive to the formation and growth of new social forces with deep interests in furthering the revolution: the national working class, agricultural laborers and peasants of the cooperatives, side by side with a broad strata of revolutionary intellectuals. Together, they form the base for the transition to socialism.

Iraq-Iran War

The most recent round of fighting between Iraq and Iran, in March, proved to be the heaviest and most atrocious battle in the entire war. The massive killing and destruction inflicted, without achieving any results, indicates the degree of frustration experienced by thousands of Iraqis and Iranians. The vicious circle perpetuated by the war is apparent in the contradictory statements made by the two sides, and in the course of the most recent battle, which lasted for two straight weeks, using a huge arsenal, including chemical weapons. As a result, the victims of the 41-month war rose sharply, not to mention the material losses. Human losses on both sides, as of the end of the third year of the war, are estimated at 125,000-175,000 killed, about 300,000 wounded and 50,000 imprisoned.

While the human and material losses are the most tragic aspect of this war, its recent escalation poses grave new dangers, threatening to enlarge the area of combat. One side of the danger is seen in Iran's having taken over a part of Iraqi territory. The other aspect is the threat of a US and NATO intervention which would lead to full imperialist control of the Gulf area, under the pretext of keeping the Hormuz Strait oil route open.

From the start, we in the PFLP, along with a broad spectrum of progressive and national forces, opposed this war. We stressed that Saddam Hussein's battlecry of «liberating Arab land» was a false cover for the regime's own reactionary ambitions. When raised by a bourgeois regime that had pulled Iraq out of the confrontation with imperialism and Zionism, this slogan had nothing in common with the goals of the Arab national liberation movement.

Today, however, the Iranian invasion of Iraq has raised the other side of this question. We now find ourselves forced to stress that it is equally unacceptable that any Arab territory be occupied, or any Arab country dismembered. Just as the Iraqi regime's original aggression diverted from the main contradiction and struggle in the area, that against the imperialist-Zionist plans, so does Iranian occupation of Iraqi territory.

Today, although the aggressor is forced to retreat and attempt to negotiate a ceasefire, the war is bound to continue. This is because the Iranian regime, that has been scoring victories in the last year, insists on continuing in order to impose its own maximum conditions. The declared Iranian conditions are: overthrow of the Saddam Hussein regime, payment of war indemnities of around $100 billion, and the return of all Iraqi refugees to their country. The Iraqi regime has accepted the last two conditions, but obviously not the first. For the Iranian regime, it remains essential that the present Iraqi regime be replaced by an Iranian-style Islamic system.

This insistence on continuing and escalating the war is tantamount to inviting imperialist intervention. Already more US and British warships are stationed in the Gulf area, which has long been defined by imperialism as an area of «vital interest». The Reagan Administration, as has been proved in Lebanon, Grenada and elsewhere, will jump at any chance to spread its hegemony. Thus, whatever party invites such interference is responsible for drawing a great threat on all the people of the area.

The threat of imperialist intervention underscores the urgency of solving the conflict on the basis of respect for each country's sovereignty and non-

interference in internal affairs. Clearly, the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime has been posited as a prerequisite for ending the war, but this must be the perogative of the national and democratic Iraqi forces who can then determine the nature of the future government.

Who can stop the war?

The question arises as to whether there is any way out of this vicious circle. Is there a way to stop the bloodshed, preserve the resources of the two peoples, avoid the occupation of Iraqi territory by Iran, and thus prevent Iraq from being divided? Last, but not least, is there a way to avoid US-NATO hegemony in the Gulf area?

As is clear from the above, neither the Iraqi nor Iranian regime is ready to make this decision at the present moment or in the near future. Nor can the so-called big powers put an end to this war.

From the beginning, the Soviet Union has stated that this war is destructive and not beneficial to either people, but rather serves only imperialism and its plans. Meanwhile, both regimes are deeply antagonistic to the Soviet Union and communism, and thus oblivious to its principled position.

On the other hand, the US and West European states have throughout had an interest in the continuation of the war. On this basis, both sides were provided with arms. This dual support is motivated by the following considerations:

1. The continuation of the war, as desired by imperialist forces and Arab reaction, serves to squander the human, economic and military resources of both countries. It has reinforced the right wing trend initiated by Saddam Hussein's regime, that pulled Iraq out of the confrontation with the enemy, and given the reasons for deepening Iraq's cooperation with Arab reaction and imperialism. This was a welcome development for US imperialism for it has simplified the implementation of its plans in the area: spreading the Camp David accords, the invasion of Lebanon, liquidating the Palestinian cause, forming a reactionary alliance in the Gulf (the Gulf Cooperation Council), and finding justifications for stepped-up US-NATO military presence in the area.

2. The continuation of the war provides the reactionary rulers in the Gulf, and the Arab world in general, with a justification for their subordination to US imperialism and their participation in its plans under the pretext of the danger coming from Iran. At the same time, it gives the US and other NATO countries an opportunity to impose their hegemony in the Gulf under the pretext of «protecting» the vital oil interests.

3. Continuation of the war was intended by the imperialist and reactionary forces to weaken the possibility for democratic change in Iraq. And indeed, Saddam Hussein's regime has utilized the war as a cover for its internal repression. A prime example of this was reported by Iraqi democratic forces in February: On Christmas Eve, 1983, security officers «called on» 670 Iraqi families in Baghdad and other towns in Iraq, to inform them of the death of a family member. The families were forbidden to hold mourning or to tell anything about the death of their sons and daughters. The authorities refused to hand over the bodies for the simple reason that these 670 men and women, of varying political and religious persuasions, had been tortured to death, and their maimed corpses would have revealed this fact. Public announcements of death are attributed to war victims.

Victims of a lost war

National democratic alternative

By inducing this comprehensive national catastrophe, the Iraqi regime has exhausted all justifications for its continued existence. The time is ripe for a national democratic alternative. The only solution is what has been agreed upon by all the Iraqi national and progressive forces: the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime, to be replaced by a national democratic authority which would implement democracy, grant autonomy to the Kurdish people, and return Iraq to the confrontation against imperialism, Zionism and reaction. This could lay the basis for a reasonable negotiated solution to the war, based on principles which would secure the interests of both peoples.

Achieving this task requires unity among all the nationalist and progressive Iraqi forces in order to determine the future course of their country. It also requires efforts from the Arab national liberation movement, the nationalist regimes and progressive forces internationally, to aid in advancing this unity, in order to bring about democratic change in Iraq. Otherwise, the forces of imperialism and reaction will prevail... ●

Zionist Global Role

In our last issue there was a study entitled «Israel and Africa», which we now complete with a short article about Israeli interests in South Africa's bantustans. In the meantime, we have received an excellent research paper made by US progressive, Steve Goldfield, Ph. D., entitled «The Israeli Role in United States' Global Strategy». We have selected a portion of this research which covers Israeli military relations with the racist regime of South Africa, to complement our theme of 'Israel' and Africa. We anticipate printing the other portions of Steve Goldfield's paper in coming issues. (Note: Every specific fact and figure in his paper is documented in footnotes. We have omitted these due to space limitations.)

Israel's closest military relations in Africa were and are with the white racists of Rhodesia and South Africa. The notorious 1978 deal, in direct violation of U.S. law, which sent Bell helicopters to Ian Smith's regime was an Israeli arms sale.[112] The Israelis also licensed Smith to produce special Uzi submachine guns called Rhuzis.[113]

South Africa, however, is the single largest Israeli weapons customer.[114] South Africa's prime suppliers of arms in 1976-77 were France and Israel.[115] Relations to go back more than fifty years between the two states and between the Zionist movement and South Africa before 1948. In fact, the same Lord Balfour responsible for the infamous British cabinet resolution favoring a Jewish homeland in Palestine had authored the measure setting up the South African state in 1913. Jan Smuts, South African Prime Minister in the twenties and again in the forties, became a fervent supporter of Zionism and a friend of Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann in London during World War I.[116] Smuts was also an architect of the Balfour Declaration.[117] The ruling South African party came to power in 1948, the same year as the declaration of the zionist state. D. F. Malan, founder of South African apartheid, a virulent anti-Semite, and an open Nazi sympathizer, was the first head of state to visit Israel.[118] Relations were fairly cool, however, until the early seventies.

In 1974 relations were raised to the ambassadorial level. Between 1968 and 1976 trade grew from $9 million to $97 million, not including arms sales.[119] South African Jewish citizens have a unique exception which allows them to invest in Israel. After the Soweto uprising in 1976 these investments grew, in a matter of months, from $8 million to $12 million. The South African government had approved a ceiling on such investments of $25 million.[120] In 1977 came the United Nations embargo on arms to South Africa. Israel pledged to observe it.[121]

Yosef Goell, a columnist for the *Jerusalem Post*, quoted a senior diplomat at the Israel Embassy in Pretoria saying, «South Africa is the only country with which we maintain relations where our main problem is not so much that of explaining Israel and her positions with the aim of improving those relations, but rather that of maintaining a low profile on what are embarrassingly good relations.»[122]

These relations are good in spite of minor provocations on both sides. Former South African Premier Verwoerd wrote a threatening letter to a leading South African Jewish lawyer saying that the fact that «so many Jews voted for the opposition Progressive party and so few for his own Nationalist party 'did not go unnoticed'», according to Goell.[123] In 1977 Jimmy Kruger, South African minister of justice and police, «castigated South African Jews for sending money to Israel and for 'running away' from South Africa in its time of troubles.»[124] Former Prime Minister Vorster, like many South African government figures, was interned during World War II because of pro-Nazi activities.

In June 1971, on the other hand, Israel offered a modest $2,000 contribution to the Liberation Committee of the Organization of African Unity,[125] which did not even deign to acknowledge the offer.[126] South Africa retaliated by suspending the transfer of $25 million in Jewish donations to Israel; the South African Jewish community is the highest per capita supporter of Israel among world Jewry.[127] The Israeli donation was quietly withdrawn.

In spite of these frictions, during Prime Minister Vorster's visit in 1976, the two governments formed a Ministerial Joint Committee made up of defense ministers of both countries.[128] According to this agreement, the exchange of Israeli arms and advice for South African strategic materials[129] has three main areas: conventional arms trade, nuclear collaboration, and counterinsurgency.[130] Since that time, South African-Israeli relations have been improving rapidly.

Israeli-supplied conventional arms sales and licensing agreements with South Africa include: Reshef-class gunboats armed with Gabriel missiles;[131] Dabour coastal patrol boats; hardened steel for for South Africa's armored

corps; self-propelled 105 mm. howitzers; air-to-air rockets; anti-tank missiles; assault rifles; radar bases; and surveillance equipment.[132] Reshefs and Galils are produced under license in South Africa.[133] In May 1971 the Israelis offered to replace three crashed South African warplanes.[134]

Between 1970 and 1979, 45 percent of Israeli arms exports were naval ships of which South Africa purchased 35 percent.[135] In the same period South Africa purchased 35 percent of all Israel's arms sales.[136] As explained earlier, South Africa provided capital to develop new Israeli warships. One $500 million contract provided South Africa with six Israeli corvettes equipped with surface to surface missiles.[137] In 1977 South Africa purchased 108 Gabriel I and II missiles and in 1979 72 more.[138] Israel modernized 150 British manufactured South African Centurion tanks after the British refused to do so.

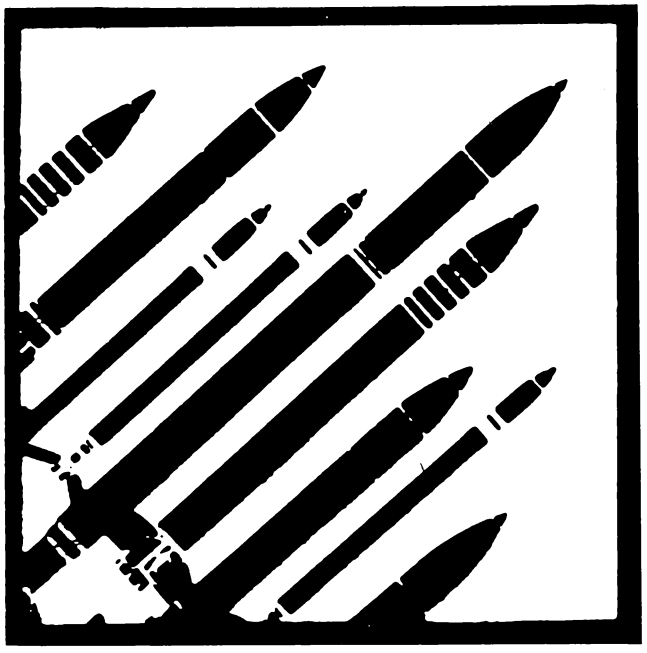
Israel has also sent Kfirs and rebuilt Mirages to South Africa.[139] South African helicopter squadrons were equipped with Israeli night visibility equipment,[140] and Israeli engineers have helped, according to the *Economist,* «develop a sensitive surveillance system using highly sophisticated electronic detection equipment along South Africa's border, aimed at detecting guerilla attacks.»[141] Many such items are supplied by Israeli subsidiaries of US firms such as General Telephone & Electric Motorola, and Control Data.[142] South Africa is also developing an export arms industry and hopes to market its arms through its close Israeli and Taiwanese partners.[143] On May 30, 1983, a South African remotely piloted spy plane was shot down over Moputo, the capital Mozambique. Its engine bore the inscription «IAI P/N ZVN 161003» and a date of manufacture of January 25, 1981. IAI, of course, is Israel Aircraft Industries.[144]

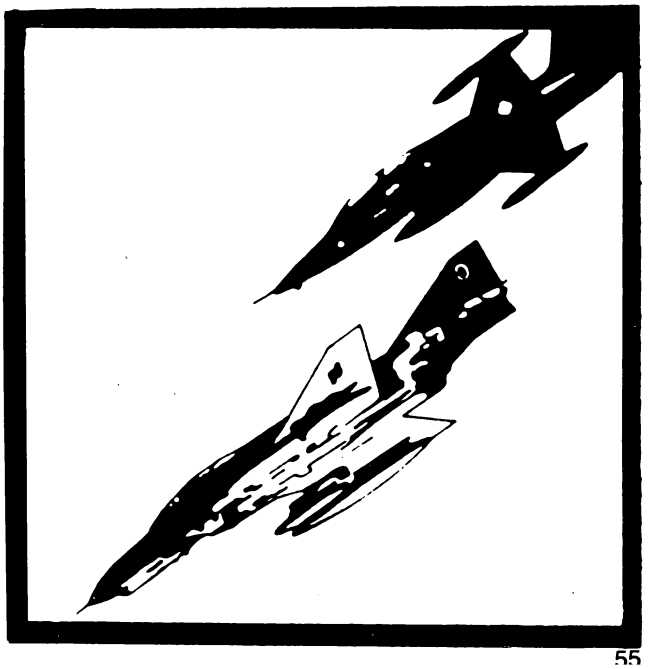
In return, according to the *Economist* South Africa has financed «some of Israel's costlier military projects». South Africa supplied the Israelis with a special steel it needed for its tanks and helped the Israelis modernize its outmoded steel industry.[145] South Africa also supplies the Israelis with uranium.[146]

Regarding part 2, on September 22, 1979 Israel and South Africa exploded their jointly developed atomic bomb in the South Atlantic near the South African coast.[147] Jack Anderson reported in 1980 that Israel, South Africa, and Taiwan were about to begin producing cruise missiles with a 1,500-mile range.[148] Anderson also said that in 1975 the Israelis fired on an American spy plane too close to their nuclear facilities. In 1979 US Ambassador to South Africa, William Edmondson, was expelled when a hidden camera was discovered under his private plane.[149] The CIA told the House Foreign Affairs Committee in a secret session in June 1981 that Israel was believed to have ten to twenty nuclear weapons deliverable either by fighter bombers or Jericho missiles.[150] Jack Anderson, however, reported an Israeli stockpile of two hundred or more nuclear bombs capable of being delivered «deep inside the Soviet Union».[151]

As to counterinsurgency, the third part of the Israeli/South African agreement, in early 1975 Henry Kissinger asked the Israeli government «to send troops to Angola in order to cooperate with the South African army» in fighting the MPLA, according to the *Economist.*[152] The Israelis did send advisers and Savimbi's UNITA in Walvis Bay Namibia.[153] In 1979 Israel Aircraft Industries built an electrified fence on the border between Angola and Namibia to thwart SWAPO guerillas.[154] Former Defense Minister Sharon spent ten days in South Africa in December 1981 and visited «operational areas in Namibia» during large scale South African attacks into Angola, according to the *New York Times.*[155]

South Africa has designated 14 percent of its territory for African Bantustans or «homelands». No country in the world, including Israel, recognizes the ▶





homelands as independent governments except South Africa. The Israeli Foreign Ministry and its South African embassy deny any dealings with the homelands. The leader of the Ciskei homeland, Lennox Sebe, visited Israel in March 1983 and on his return said Israel and Ciskei would have closer cooperation, including «special weapons and know how», Sebe said that the Israelis had sold the Ciskei a twin engine jet previously used by Menahem Begin at a «nominal fee» and that Israel donated a police dog to his brother, Lieut. Gen. Charles Sebe, the chief of the security police.[156]

Jordan, incidentally, sold British-made weapons - 41 Centurion tanks and 54 Tigercat missiles - to South Africa. Since France officially complied with the United Nations embargo on arms sales to South Africa in 1977, Egypt has served as a conduit for French arms to South Africa.[157] ●

Bantustans A Zionist Dream

Israeli involvement in South Africa's bantustans deserves special note. It is an extension of the Zionist state's alliance with the apartheid regime in Pretoria, which enacted the 'independence' of Transkei, Ciskei, Bophuthatswana and Venda to finalize the disenfranchisement of South Africa's Black majority. Pretoria's final solution bears strong resemblance to Zionist plans for banishing the Palestinians - population transfer expulsion, 'autonomy' and 'civil administration'. Whether Pretoria or Tel Aviv style, the thrust is to control the land and resources, while reducing the inhabitants to a powerless, cheap labour reserve. In Ciskei, for example, half of the citizens are migrant workers in South Africa on temporary permits, while many others commute there for work on a daily basis.

'Israel', whose own economy relies heavily on labour from the 1967 occupied territories, has found new 'virgin soil' for high-profit investment. The residents of the bantustans are doubly vulnerable: Expelled from their country to tribal 'homelands' where land, resources and job opportunities are extremely scarce, they are also subject to the control of reactionary chieftains, whom Pretoria turned into 'presidents' of the artificially created 'republics'. These tribal chiefs, who have collaborated with Pretoria against their own people, have no qualms about cooperation with Palestine's usurpers. They play the role which the Zionists had hoped to assign to the village leagues in the West Bank and to Saad Haddad's militias in South Lebanon. Bophuthatswana's Manpower Minister, Rowan Cronje, was a minister in Ian Smith's minority regime in Rhodesia. Ciskei's rulers have a special reputation for ruthlessness, and have transformed a sports stadium into a concentration camp for opponents of apartheid. Needless to say, trade unions are suppressed when not outright banned.

Along with firms from Taiwan, 'Israel' was first to respond to Pretoria's drive to gain foreign investment in order to give the bantustans a measure of credibility. In late 1982, the Ciskei Trade Mission opened in Tel Aviv, flying its own flag and staffed by two Israelis, Yosef Schneider and Nat Rosenwasser, who are employed by the Ciskei Foreign Ministry. Bophuthatswana also has a representative in 'Israel', Shabtai Kalmonowitz, who claims diplomatic status.

The Israeli government disclaims any official relations with the bantustans, which are recognized only by South Africa and its satellites, yet relations flourish in the name of business. As of March 1983, three Israeli companies had concessions in the bantustans for a total investment of £1.36 million. Later in the year, two Israeli firms signed a deal to establish the first Israeli-owned factory in Ciskei, while another landed a construction contract in Bophuthatswana.

Knowing the structure of the Zionist state, this 'private' business is not divorced from the Israeli political and military hierarchy. On the contrary, there are concrete indications that relations are actually state-to-state:

-In 1983, and quite officially, 'Israel' was visited by the rulers of both Bophuthatswana and Ciskei, as well as by Venda's entire chamber of commerce. This was the seventh visit for Ciskei's Sebe, who was received at the Israeli Ministry of Tourism and Tel Aviv's Trade Fair Center, which is partially owned by the municipality. On this supposedly private visit, Sebe secured a contract with the Israeli government to supply and train his armed forces. Initially, six planes - at least one a military helicopter- were sold to Ciskei, and 18 Ciskei residents arrived in 'Israel' for pilot training.

-During the May 1983 visit of Bophuthatswana's Education and Manpower Ministers, Israel Educational Television agreed to make a master plan for establishing and running an educational TV station in the bantustan, to begin operation in 1985. Ya'acov Lorberbaum, who manages the Israeli station, is also professor of communications at Bar Ilan University, which has had links with the University of Bophuthatswana since 1981. During their visit, the two Bophuthatswana ministers were also given a tour of Tel Aviv's schools by Mayor Shlomo Lahat. Surely, the apartheid politicians in Pretoria are happy to see the racist ideology of Zionism taking charge of brainwashing the African masses.

-Equally indicative of the official nature of Israeli relations with the bantustans is the status of the businessmen involved. These include prominent Likud politicians, at least two Knesset members, a National Religious Party activist and retired IDF officers; one of the latter, Tat Aluf (Brig. Gen. Res.) Efraim Poran served as military adviser to Prime Minister Rabin and later Begin. ●

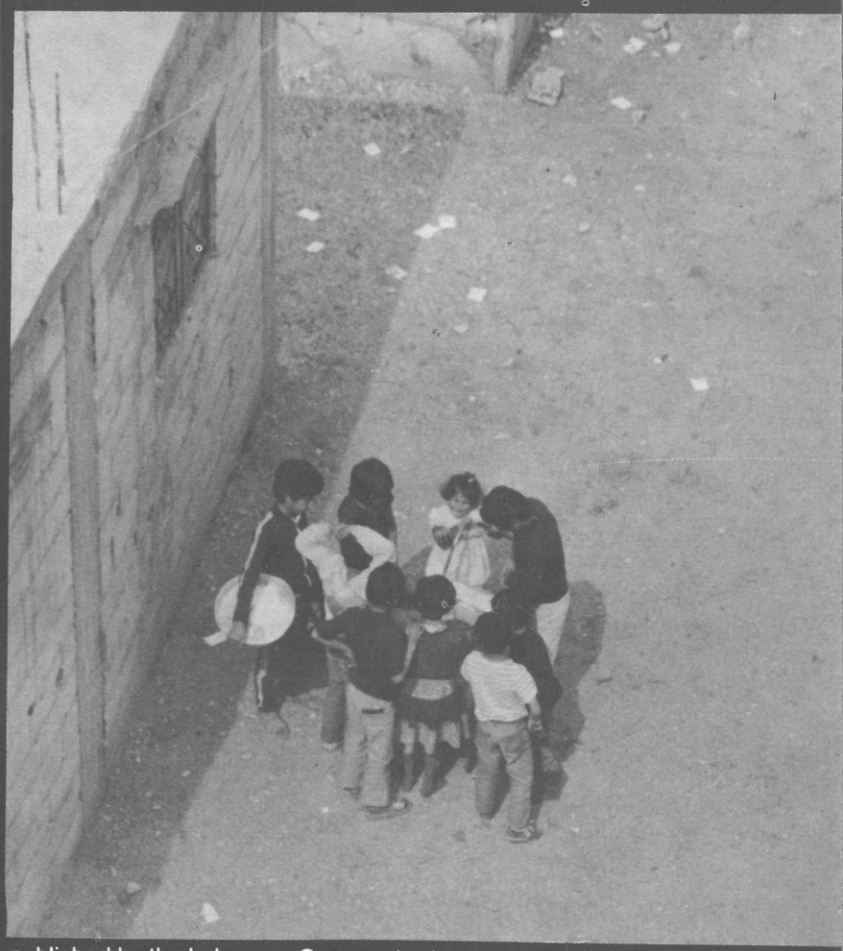
CULTURE

To the eyes of children we sing
We fill the yards with hopes
We fight the occupiers
We attack his convoys
And the sun rises
And the land of the South will be liberated

We want our children to have
kindergartens, schools in the future
We want them to have clean clothes
and broad playgrounds...
to learn drawing, singing and dancing
and to know the joy of wild flowers

For all this, we pay the tax of blood
For all this, we sing in the yards
We sing for liberation
We sing for the coming dawn
We sing for the children of the South

-Salma, Sour (Tyre), South Lebanon



This poem is taken from *Beirut Al Masa* magazine, published by the Lebanese Communist Action Organization.

Contemporary Palestinian Art, its Start and Environment Influence

Despite the universality of human civilization, one can speak of an independent art, heritage and history of any one people, based on the particular characteristics which determine their identity as the result of a specific historical sequence.

Contemporary Palestinian art cannot be isolated from the historical development which has shaped the Palestinian people, and all the upheavals which have affected Palestine. Of particular impact were the repeated invasions, the last of which was the Zionist invasion, bringing constant attempts to obliterate the civilization and cultural features of the Palestinian people. Continuous invasion affected the cultural, social and political continuity in Palestine and subjected it to instability and various distortions as is the case in many Arab and 'third world' countries, while Europe experienced a rich development on this level.

The start of the Palestinian plastic art movement
The stage prior to 1948

Aside from drawings in churches, the Islamic ornaments and the popular art heritage from ancient times, the plastic art movement in Palestine started relatively late. With the beginning of this century, it took the form of handicrafts as well as oil paintings, generally landscapes and portraits. At this stage, the movement was weak in terms of productivity and exhibitions, due to the small number of painters, and especially of ones who studied art.

The crystallization of the movement
The stage after 1948

The modern Palestinian art movement crystallized in the middle of this century, after the 1948 war and the Israeli occupation of significant parts of the Palestinian homeland, which forced thousands of Palestinians into exile, displacement and starvation. At this time, a few pioneer artists began to record the human plight of the Palestinian people in their works of art. Ismail Shamout can be considered a pioneer in this respect. He was one of the thousands exiled into refugee camps. In those difficult circumstances, he started his art work with images of the daily details of his people's suffering. Shamout's early works dealt with the subjects of the Palestinian people's exodus and suffering in exile...the massacres committed by the Zionist gangs and the simple tents under whose roof the refugees lived in misery. Amidst this desperation, he also depicted the hope of salvation, the reversal of the exodus, and the return to the homeland of sweet memories.

Shamout's graphic realism played a great role in establishing the basis of contemporary Palestinian art. Later on, many artists used the same style and subject matter, namely Taman el Shamout, Tawfiq Abdul Al, Mustafa Hallaj, etc. Together, these artists formed the basis for this movement as it existed until the 1967 rise of the armed Palestinian revolution, which these artists professed in many of their works.

The above concerns mainly the subject matter of the Palestinian art at this stage. With regards to artistic style, classical realism was dominant, combining reality with artistic features. The dominance of this style is due to several factors: For one, the Palestinian art movement was still young and was not yet affected by modern art. Secondly, the dramatic nature of the subject matter imposed by the Palestinian experience demanded such a style. Thirdly, the Palestinian people were most able to grasp a realistic portrayal of their situation.

The rise of the armed revolution
The stage after 1967

The rise of the armed Palestinian revolution deeply affected the various aspects of Palestinian life - cultural, social, political and even psychological. The people who had suffered so much aggression and displacement now moved into the stage of defending their right to live and return to their lost homeland. The Palestinian art of this stage was characterized by the following features.

First: The appearance of new symbols more defiant, assertive and radical than those previously employed, such as the fedayeen and gun to symbolize the revolution; the horse as a symbol of ascent; the kaffiyeh as a symbol of Palestinian identity; the dove for peace; blood for sacrifice; and the woman representing the land and fertility.

These symbols recurred in most artistic works appearing in the revolutionary stage which we can call the stage of hope. Of course, within this commonality of symbols, we can see different modes of application in accordance with each artist's style.

Second: In this stage, a great number of Palestinians studied at art academies, which enriched the movement. Related to this, new styles, trends and schools like symbolism, impressionism, cubism and surrealism began to influence Palestinian art.

Third: In order to confront the Zionist theft and plunder of Palestinian heritage, there was renewed employment of traditional Palestinian ornamental and popular art.

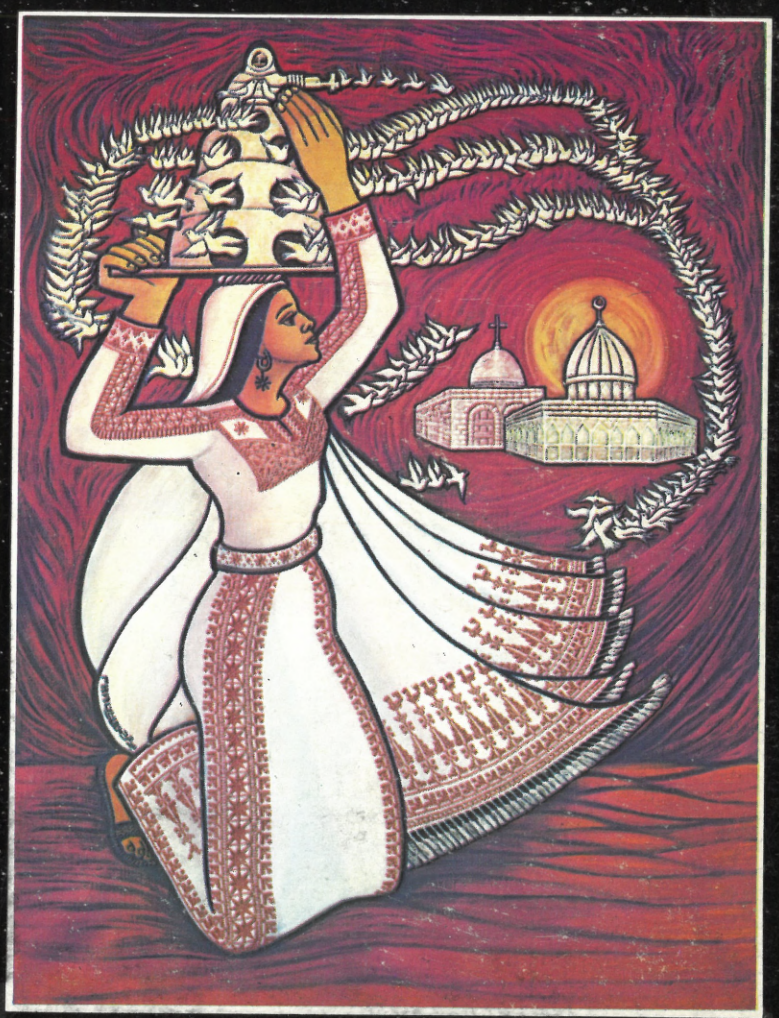
Fourth: This stage was characterized by the spread of Palestinian art from the local level to broader scopes through exhibitions in Arab and foreign cou[illegible]

Fifth: This stage witnessed the emergence and proliferation of political posters, using the same symbols applied in other artistic works, as a means of combining political and cultural awareness on the mass level.

These are the basic features of the Palestinian art movement in the stage of the revolution. It represents an important leap in Palestinian cultural life in terms of introducing the human and cultural aspects of the Palestinian people and their just cause. Greater artistic awareness was created in the general public, harmonizing with the qualitative changes brought about in this stage, both politically and socially. ●

Imad Abdul-Wahab

Ismail Shammut



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